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Your essential daily news | WEEKEND, NOVEMBER 6-8, 2015

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PHOTOS TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE; THE CANADIAN PRESS; GETTY IMAGES

GTA'S POWER SEVEN

Who the Toronto-area's new cabinet ministers are and what they can do metroNEWS

Meet Turbo...

Just a little goat in the big city. metroNEWS

007

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Your essential daily news

"Because it's 2015" quip gets international recognition. Canada

CROWDFUNDING

Man isn't getting Uber love

A Brampton man who turned to crowdfunding for help paying a $663 bill from Uber isn't receiving a lot of support or sympathy online.

The campaign creator, "Loco Daniel," says Halloween was the first time he'd used the app for a long ride, thinking it would be a safe way home from Toronto after partying for Halloween.

What he didn't understand was that Uber's surge pricing — a rate the company charges when demand for rides is more than usual — had kicked in.

The 58-minute ride would have cost him $184.27 on an average day. But, with the surge, his bill came to a whooping $663.37.

The idea of crowdfunding an expensive Uber ride is nothing new. A Baltimore woman in a similar situation managed to raise $512 to cover her $362 Uber bill last Halloween.

Daniel, however, has received more snide comments than dollars.

"It's your own fault, man! You very clearly have to state you accept the surge by typing it. Mine was 6.0 surge at one point on Halloween therefore took a taxi," one person said.

A screenshot of the bill Daniel posted online, shows the surge charge was accepted 10 minutes before his ride arrived.

MALLORY CHATE/FOR METRO

Turbo: Goat in the City

Five-year-old Turbo, a Nigerian dwarf goat and official ambassador for this year's Royal Agricultural Winter Fair caught a trip to Hogtown on the GO train from his hometown of Oshawa on Thursday. He had a busy day, spending time at several key spots before eventually making his way to Bathurst Station where he boarded a streetcar en route to Exhibition Place. Turbo will be on show there through Nov. 15 as part of the fair, the largest indoor agricultural show of its kind. We caught up with Turbo along his Royal route and grabbed a few insights from the now famous farmster.

LIZ BEDDALL METRO

Noon: Turbo's had a busy morning, including a commute to city hall. Two hours in, he's shocked to be receiving encouraging Tweets — directed to @Turbo_Goat — from around the world.

1:45 p.m.: Entering Bathurst Station, where TTC riders line up to get their pictures taken with the official ambassador of the Royal winter fair.

2 p.m.: Turbo boards the 509 Exhibition streetcar en route to the fairgrounds. He only pees once on the way.

Question: You seem to travel with quite an entourage. What perks of your celebrity status do your companions benefit from?
Answer: They get to meet and hang out with my celebrity friends. They don't have to make dinner reservations at the feed trough. They can walk into any barn and get a table.

You seem very well groomed. Do you have some tips for other men out there looking to enhance their beauty regimen?
Well, if you can't grow a moustache for Movember, grow a goat-tee. Always see a professional groomer.

You're an inspiration to many goats, but who are your idols?
Bear Grylls, he climbs a mean mountain.

You're a country goat, but, on the occasion that you visit the city, where do you have to go?
This time of year my go to spot is the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair. But, in general I have to see the CN Tower of course, the waterfront and maybe the AGO to see some paintings by Vincent Van Goat.

If you were considering a permanent relocation, what area of the city would you move to?
Hogs hollow to be with my animal friends.

At the fair you'll be encountering thousands of your fans. How do you combat stage fright?
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HUDSON'S BAY

66% Spike In Recent Foreclosures Plus Aging Baby Boomers Downsizing Creating Discounted Property Frenzy In U.S.

New Real Estate Bonanza

Right now while you are reading this, hedge funds are buying U.S. property in mass. Foreign nationals are loading up on houses as fast as they can. Some savvy individuals are snapping up housing in the U.S. like never before.

In October, Reuters reported private investment firm Starwood Capital Group got in the game. They purchased 23,262 mid-rise and garden-style apartments for a whopping $5.37 billion. Other hedge funds are buying entire subdivisions under construction.

The Chinese are the number one overseas investors of U.S. real estate. Often they will buy 10 condos at once, sight unseen.

Does all this investment activity show the U.S. headed for another property bubble? The answer is no.

Demographics are driving demand for rental property to heights unseen in American history. Bloomberg Business says rents are only going higher.

The Millennials saddled with student debt, are choosing to rent. Others want to live in cities and avoid long commutes home ownership often demands.

One of the fastest growing demographic segments in the U.S. is those over age 65. Their downsizing activity is flooding the market with discounted property.

Foreclosures, Flips & Flowing Money

Foreclosures clogged in the U.S. courts are now surging. Those that know how are gaining windfalls of opportunity for flips or portfolio growth.

Yet individual investors are asking, "Can I still find good deals in U.S. property?" The answer is an emphatic YES.

Real estate investors on the Turnkey Trainings team know the right way to buy property. No matter what the economy is doing. Using their proprietary techniques,

Warren Buffet told CNBC he would buy a couple hundred thousand single family homes if he could.

you too can find screaming bargains in the U.S.

They will reveal these breakthrough strategies at the FREE events in the Vancouver area. When you attend you'll see many successful former students who made a bundle in U.S. real estate.

The Vancouver couple pictured here, were able to buy an entire trailer park in Florida for half off. Their investment brings them a 23% net annual return on their money. Would you like these types of returns?

Another Canadian couple found and flipped a property in 2 weeks to pocket a cool $40,000! Imagine if you could do that just a couple of times a year.

You can if you gain the knowledge. You will after attending this FREE educational event where you will find out;

- Super simple method for getting sellers to chase you. The sellers of the trailer park mentioned above emailed and texted the buyers over 100 times! Hear the secret strategy to make sellers want to deal with you!
- How to get funding for your deals, so you never have to tie up your own money or use your credit! We'll give you a free funding certificate just for attending!
- How to beat the house flipping wizards by becoming a wholesaler to hedge funds
- New zero money down strategies! News to you no matter how many real estate seminars you may have attended!
- How to close property deals over the phone in 9 minutes or less

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58-storey highrise called 'good news'

ST. JAMESTOWN

Housing advocates hope units will be affordable

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

A plan to build more than 50 floors of apartments in St. Jamestown comes as Toronto is rapidly gaining purpose-built rental apartments — good news in a city with low vacancy rates and sky-high prices.

The 58-storey building planned for Sherbourne and Howard Streets would bring 640 residential units to the area.

Most are small: 416 are planned as studio or one-bedroom units, 212 as two-bedroom units and only 12 as three-bedroom units. Still, it's being welcomed by housing advocates.

"For us it's pretty good news that it's rentals because it's difficult to find rentals in the city," said ACORN spokesperson Alejandra Ruiz Vargas.

The hope is that the units will be affordable — and "affordable" by the standards of people who are struggling to find housing today, she said.

According to rental market research firm Urbanation, the GTA has hit a 25-year high with an estimated 6,523 purpose-built rental apartments in construction as of the third quarter.

At the same time, 8,398 condo/apartments were being rented through the multiple-listing service, also a new high, Urbanation found. Another 3,820 new apartment units — including the 640 at Sherbourne and Howard Streets — had been proposed by developers, a 41 per cent increase over last year.

A new apartment tower is planned for this corner in St. Jamestown. LIZ BEDDALL/METRO

HEALTH

Ford begins chemo to fight new tumours

Coun. Rob Ford has started chemotherapy to shrink two tumours attached to his bladder.

Ford's aide Dan Jacobs said on Thursday that the "working diagnosis" is that the former mayor's cancer is back.

"Coun. Ford has been at the hospital several times this week, undergoing additional tests and consulting with his health team," Jacobs said. "He has now been admitted at Mount Sinai Hospital, and is undergoing chemotherapy."

> **We're just going to keep fighting and do whatever we can.**
> Doug Ford

Doug Ford told CP24 Thursday evening that his brother has two tumours attached to his bladder — roughly five centimetres and seven centimetres long that "almost look like a snowman, on top of each other by his bladder" — and that he will be undergoing five days of chemotherapy. He will then take several weeks off before returning for another round of chemotherapy, at which point doctors will assess if the tumours are operable, Doug Ford said.

"Rob's in a massive battle right now and we're just going to keep fighting and do whatever we can, leave no stone unturned and making sure he gets as much help as he needs," Doug Ford said, adding messages from supporters are helping the family.

Ford still wears an abdominal bind and drain from his 10-hour surgery last May to remove a cancerous tumour from his abdomen. Tests last week revealed the new growth that, Ford said, is consistent with his previous pleomorphic liposarcoma.

The five-year survival rate for the rare and aggressive cancer is 56 per cent, according to the Liddy Shriver Sarcoma Initiative, based in Ossining, N.Y.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Get rid of your guns, no strings attached

A vintage gun and a faded Band Aid tin full of ammunition is a pretty standard find for the Toronto police gun amnesty program.

The 2015 amnesty runs through Nov. 16 with people invited to call 416-808-2222 to arrange for an officer to pick up a gun at their home — no legal consequences faced.

Const. Chris Boddy said police have taken dozens of calls since the drive began Nov. 2. Generally, they come from law-abiding people who have an old gun left in their care by a family member.

"We've taken handguns out of dining-room hutches and shot guns out of closets," Boddy said.

People are being asked not to bring guns to the police station.

JESSICA SMITH CROSS/METRO

One of the vintage guns turned over to police. TWITTER

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13 years old: time to retire

TOYS 'R' US

Chief play officer leaving after two years at fun company

He's yet to graduate high school, nab a driver's license or reach legal drinking age, but he's already headed for retirement.

After a little more than two years on the job, Alex Thorne, 13, is calling it quits.

"I'm getting a bit old. My back is killing me," jokes the Pickering boy, who has been Toys "R" Us's chief play officer since August 2013.

The gig, a dream job for most children, has made him among the first in Canada to get his hands on every season's coolest toys, testing items that make Christmas wish lists months in advance.

"It's too hard to keep track" of all the toys he's tried, but he estimates the number to be in the hundreds.

That includes plenty of light sabers, nerf guns, scooters, Barbie dolls and craft kits so it would be natural to think that the best part of the job has been the toys, but Alex says "that's too stereotypical for a kid."

Alex checks out Lego Dimensions games, one of his top toys. He plays with all of the new toys on the market and selects his top 20 picks that are highlighted in the store. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

"While the toys are really great, I love the travelling," he told Torstar News Service, rattling off a list of Canadian cities he's jet-setted to for appearances on morning shows, where he tells gift-givers exactly what presents will have kids cracking a smile.

> **"I haven't seen a bad toy yet.**
> Alex Thorne

Luckily, Alex claims, "I haven't seen a bad toy yet."

However, he admits, "something like a Thomas the Tank Engine set is a good toy, (but) it would not appeal to me so what I have to do is put myself in the mind of someone who would like a Thomas the Tank Engine and what would be cool to them."

Reviewing so many toys makes putting together a list for Santa Claus each year "pretty difficult," but Alex says there are toys he doesn't receive from his job that he wants.

Take video games, for example.

"They are going to give me a few that are going to be the hottest this season, but the others ones, I get for Christmas," he says. "It works out pretty well for me."

Alex only keeps a few toys out of every allotment he's given—there's only so much space in his bedroom to store them, he says. The rest are donated to charities, friends and Alex's old daycare.

His brother also gets to snag a few.

"He has all the benefits of getting the toys without having to do all the work," says Alex. "You could argue his situation might be a little bit better (than mine), but I like my situation better because I get to travel."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

COUNCIL

Garbage and water rate hikes requested

Toronto city staff want council to hike homeowners' water bills by eight per cent next year and the garbage collection levy by three per cent, according to documents released Thursday.

The reports and public notices were released ahead of Friday's launch of the so-called "rate-supported" budget — water, garbage and the Toronto parking authority. Both hikes are in line with recent years, but the documents hint at other changes that could cost homeowners. Council hiked water rates by nine per cent a year for nine years ending in 2014, to generate revenue for repairs and stormwater runoff upgrades. The new documents suggest staff want to stick with the plan to hike the rates by eight per cent each year between 2015 and 2017. Staff are proposing the threshold for lower industrial rates be dropped from 6,000 to 5,000 cubic metres.

This year's documents say only that "changes" to the rebate will be considered later, with the operating budget. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Introducing the Cabinet's Group of 7

One cabinet minister's greatest vice is Girl Guide cookies. Another is a highland dancer. While they are undeniably important facts, there's more you need to know about the seven GTA politicians tapped to oversee some of Canada's most important files.

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

GETTY IMAGES

1 Chrystia Freeland

University-Rosedale

Freeland was the Liberals' trade critic before she was named Minister of International Trade. She'll be handling the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Canadian-European Union trade agreement. Her first promise as minister was to make sure Canada is "a winner" in trade deals.

But don't expect a trade mission to Russia on her agenda. Freeland speaks Russian and has written a book on the country. She was banned from the country last year, along with 12 other Canadians lawmakers, in a diplomatic tussle about Canada's sanctions over Ukraine.

Freeland, who has a Ukrainian heritage, began her journalism career reporting from Ukraine. Prior to politics, she had top management positions at Thomson Reuters. She has three children with her husband, New York Times reporter Graham Bowley.

2 Kirsty Duncan

Etobicoke North

THE CANADIAN PRESS

When Duncan was named Minister of Science, many noticed that she has more experience in science than some previous people in the position.

Prior to politics, Duncan was a professor of health geography at University of Toronto. She wrote a book, published in 2003, about her expedition to the permafrost of Norway in search of the virus that caused the 1918 Spanish Flu pandemic. She served on the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change with former U.S. vice-president Al Gore that won the 1997 Nobel Peace Prize.

Duncan is a trained gymnast and highland dancer, according to her social media profiles. In 2013 she wrote an op-ed piece about women in science, in which she quoted her aunt's reaction to her studies: "What boy will ever want to marry you, a girl taking science, really?"

3 Bill Morneau

GETTY IMAGES

Toronto Centre

Morneau is Canada's new finance minister. His experience comes from Bay Street as the former CEO of pension consulting firm Morneau Shepell, which his father founded in 1966.

That experience will come in handy because one of the Liberal Party's promises is improving the Canada Pension Plan. Last year, Morneau sat on an a government panel that led to the Ontario Retirement Pension plan.

He's a father of four, married to Nancy McCain of the food-company family. When asked by Toronto Life what his worst vice is, he answered, "Vanilla Girl Guide cookies. The old-fashioned ones."

4 John McCallum

Markham-Thornhill

McCallum, one of the most senior politicians in cabinet, is Minister of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship, and responsible for implementing the Liberal's promise to bring 25,000 Syrian refugees to Canada by Christmas. Fittingly, the word "refugees" is a new addition to the ministerial title.

McCallum, who's married with three sons, was first elected in 2000, after six years as chief economist for the Royal Bank of Canada. He served as Minister of Defence in 2002-03. In 2002, he got into political hot water for ignorance over military history, confusing the 1917 Battle of Vimy Ridge with Vichy France of the Second World War.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

6 Carolyn Bennett

Toronto–St. Paul's

THE CANADIAN PRESS

As Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs, Bennett is tasked with implementing the party's promise to have a national inquiry into missing and murdered aboriginal women, ensuring a safe supply of drinking water to First Nations reserves and making a large investment in First Nations education.

Prior to being elected to parliament in 1997, she was a doctor and founding partner of Bedford Medical Associates in Toronto. After the 2003 SARS outbreak, she was named the Minister of State for Public Health. She created the Public Health Agency of Canada, and was then named Canada's first Chief Public Health Officer. She has two sons with her husband, Canadian film producer Peter O'Brian.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

7 Dr. Jane Philpott

Markham–Stouffville

Philpott is another rookie MP with real-world experience in her new ministry. Prior to being named Minister of Health, she was a family doctor and chief of family medicine at Markham Stouffville Hospital. Prior to that, she practised medicine for nine years in Niger.

Philpott is married and has four children. She has written about her family tragedy, losing her 2-1/2-year-old daughter to meningococcal meningitis when the family lived in Niger, hours away from the nearest hospital.

Philpott has a big job ahead of her: negotiating a new federal health accord.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

5 Navdeep Singh Bains

Mississauga-Malton

Bains is the Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic Development, the new name for the Minister of Industry. He was first elected in 2004.

Bains is a certified management account and worked as an analyst for Nike Canada and Ford prior to entering politics. He's also a visiting professor at the Ted Rogers School of Management and is married with two kids.

He hit the ground running. In his first two days as minister, he took a call from Quebec's economy minister, requesting help with bailing out Bombardier. He also made one of the Trudeau government's first announcements, restoring the long-form census.

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Ancient tree avoids the axe

ENVIRONMENT

Parkette to be built around 300-year-old red oak

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Edith George's red oak tree may be saved after all.

City council has agreed to seek private donations to cover the cost of protecting a nearly 300-year-old tree in North York.

The decision was like music to George's years.

"Fantastic. I am ecstatic," said George, a historian and conservationist who's been a staunch advocate of the tree for more than 10 years.

She's worried future owners of the property at 76 Coral Gable Dr. might decide to get rid of the tree — something George says would take away an important piece of history.

A recent petition calling for the city to take preventive measures garnered nearly 1,500 signatures.

For George, that giant tree is a source of inspiration on a "dying planet."

"Can you imagine a living thing that started from an acorn way before our country was born?" she said. "That tree is Canada. It is a true survivor and a big piece of legacy."

The city will create a trust fund specifically for this project with the goal of collecting $550,000 to $700,000, said Coun. Giorgio Mammoliti, who introduced the motion to council.

Once the money has been raised, the city will buy the property, knock down the house and create a parkette around the tree.

"The tree would be surrounded by a protective shield, a kind of see-through, where everyone can look at it but not touch it or climb it," he said, praising George for her work on the issue.

> **That tree is Canada.**
> Edith George

City council plans to buy the property that plays home to a giant oak tree, turning the space into a park. CONTRIBUTED

IN BRIEF

Leaside shooting kills man

A man in his 20s has died in hospital after suffering a single gunshot wound at a home in Leaside.

Toronto police began an investigation at a Rykert Crescent. home, near Eglinton Avenue East and Brentcliffe Road, around 10:30 Wednesday night. Paramedics rushed the man to hospital without vital signs.

While homicide detectives were on scene, they did not say if anyone is facing charges.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Charges laid after head-on collision kills three

A 28-year-old man has been charged in connection with a collision near Aurora that left three people dead on Oct. 27.

The two-vehicle, head-on crash happened on Hwy. 404 near Stouffville Road when a southbound vehicle crossed the median strip and struck another vehicle heading northbound.

According to a released statement from police, the driver of the southbound car, Chenxing Carl Zhang of Toronto, has been charged with careless driving and failure to properly wear a seatbelt.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Spiritual scammers work in Cantonese

York regional police are warning residents against an "evil spirits" scam that has already claimed at least two victims in Markham in recent weeks.

The scam involves a group of suspects who approach victims on the street and offer to remove evil spirits that are surrounding them in a simple blessing ritual. To complete the ritual, the victim is told to go home, gather all of their cash and valuables in a bag, and return.

In one of the reported cases, the victim lost over $8,000 worth of cash and jewelry.

According to police, the suspects speak Cantonese and appear to be targeting elderly Chinese women.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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TORONTO HYDRO

Humans of Toronto by K. Omar

K.Omar: "Can I take your photo for my blog?"

Woman: "Where will it appear?"
Omar: "Instagram."
Woman: "Oh, God."

Humans of Toronto is K. Omar's social photography project aimed at photographing and talking to people in the city. Selections from her work feature weekly in Metro. See more at Humans_of_Toronto on Instagram.

SEXUAL ASSAULT

OPSEU man facing charges

A long-time employee and former spokesman for the Ontario Public Service Employees Union is facing 12 counts of sexual assault.

Donald Ford, 51, is alleged to have sexually assaulted three women between March 2011 and March 2015 at the OPSEU office in the Lesmill Road and York Mills Road area. The union would not confirm that the alleged victims are OPSEU employees.

Police believe there may be more victims.

Ford had his first appearance in court on Nov. 3 at 1000 Finch Ave. W. He is due back Dec. 4.

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IN BRIEF

Canada signs several side deals amid TPP text release
Canada has signed almost two dozen side letters with its trading partners in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, including an agreement with the United States to combat illicit trade.

Canada also has a side agreement with Japan that appears to protect the exports of British Columbia logs, a key sticking point between the two countries. The letters were released as the text of the broader TPP agreement, finalized Oct. 5 by a dozen Pacific Rim countries, was released Thursday by the New Zealand government. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Trudeau loosens reins on diplomats
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has unshackled his top diplomats. Trudeau sent a letter Wednesday to the ambassadors and high commissioners of Canada's foreign missions telling them he and his cabinet will be relying on their judgment and insight to advance Canada's foreign-policy goals.

The letter marks a reversal of the strict message control that Harper imposed on his top diplomats over much of the past decade. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Puppet maker boosting political engagement
Textile artist Gabe Thirlwall started a collection of handmade political finger puppets after moving to Ottawa eight years ago as a way to encourage political engagement. Now she's thinking about a redesign to turn the long-haired, open-shirted Justin Trudeau puppet into one that better resembles Canada's 23rd prime minister. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Power stays top-heavy

REFORM ACT

Liberal MPs defer decision to dilute PM's influence

Newly minted Liberal MPs have passed on their chance to give backbenchers more clout and dilute the powers of their leader.

Under the Reform Act passed by all parties last spring — and supported by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau — each party's MPs were supposed to choose at their first caucus meeting after an election whether to adopt rules aimed at rebalancing power between MPs and their leaders.

Among other things, the rules would allow backbenchers to trigger a leadership review and potentially to oust their leader altogether.

But at their first caucus meeting Thursday, Liberal MPs chose unanimously to defer a decision on the rules until party members could weigh in on the matter at a national convention scheduled for late May.

"A number of the elements that were proposed in the Reform Act, in our view, weaken the role of the membership of the party," government House leader Dominic LeBlanc said following the caucus meeting.

"Our leader was not selected simply by a vote in caucus. Our leader was selected by an open, democratic process of members … and supporters. So we didn't think it was appropriate at the first meeting of a new caucus to do something that would massively change the authority and the leadership that we've vested in the volunteers and the members of our party."

MPs agreed unanimously that such a dramatic change should only be approved by delegates to the next national convention, he added.

The decision to defer the matter came even as Trudeau is promising to empower MPs from all parties, bolster parliamentary committees and reverse the centralization of power in the Prime Minister's Office.

The Reform Act was the brainchild of Conservative backbencher Michael Chong, who watered down a number of his original proposals in order to win all-party support, including adding the caucus opt-in provision.

For a caucus that opts in, the act specifies that a leadership review vote can be triggered if 20 per cent or more of a party's MPs request it. A subsequent majority vote by MPs against a leader would be sufficient to force a leadership contest.

The act also gives MPs the power to decide if an errant colleague should be expelled from or readmitted to their caucus, something traditionally the exclusive preserve of the leader. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Trudeau holds his first caucus meeting on Parliament Hill in Ottawa on Thursday.
SEAN KILPATRICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL

Trudeau triumphs over Trump in Forbes ranking
Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is the 69th most powerful person in the world, according to Forbes magazine.

The newly elected Liberal leader is three places above U.S. Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump in the annual list.

Stephen Harper did not feature in 2014.

Russian president Vladimir Putin has the top spot this year, ahead of the chancellor of Germany, Angela Merkel, and U.S. President Barack Obama. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

MEDIA

'Because it's 2015' grabbing headlines

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's succinct "because it's 2015" explanation of his new, half-female cabinet has attracted international attention.

The New York Times, Newsweek, Slate, the NBC Nightly News website and various other U.S. news organizations reported on Trudeau's swearing-in on Wednesday, including his retort to a reporter when asked why having a cabinet with an equal number of men and women was important to him.

Newsweek cited a United Nations study to note that with Trudeau's gender-equal cabinet, Canada will now rank No. 4 in the world in terms of percentage of women in ministerial positions, tied with France and Liechtenstein. It was previously in 20th place, according to the UN Women report. Finland is No. 1.

Even some celebrities waxed poetic.

"Why a gender balanced/50:50 government? 'Because it's 2015!' Coolest thing I've seen in a while. Love U Canada," actress Emma Watson, of Harry Potter fame, wrote on Twitter. THE CANADIAN PRESS

> **He's picked 15 men and 15 women — the first gender-balanced ministerial team in the country's history.**
> Excerpt from Britain's Telegraph

CONSERVATIVE PARTY

Ambrose new interim leader

Alberta MP Rona Ambrose stepped into Stephen Harper's leadership shoes Thursday — albeit on an interim basis — as the Conservatives gathered for the first time since last month's election demoted them to the official Opposition. Ambrose, who served as health minister in the last Parliament, had campaigned on a promise to bring a respectful and civil tone to debate in the House of Commons.

"I'm excited that we are going to be moving forward with a strong opposition with confidence and optimism," she said, flanked by fellow Conservative caucus members chanting her name in support. "I am extremely proud to be the new leader of the Opposition."

Ambrose, 46, was first elected to the House of Commons in 2004 and went on to serve in several cabinet posts under Harper.

She has also been active in the promotion of women in leadership positions, and in that portfolio struck a committee to examine how to get more women involved in the highest echelons of the corporate sector. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Rona Ambrose will take position as temporary head of the Conservatives.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

STATISTICS

Liberals follow through with reinstating long-form census

The new Liberal government is making good on a promise to resurrect the mandatory, long-form census killed off by the Conservatives but is vague on the details of how it plans to persuade Canadians to fill it out.

The long-form component of the 2011 questionnaire was axed by Stephen Harper's government, which called it intrusive to threaten people with fines and jail time for not answering personal questions — a nod to the party's libertarian base.

> **Communities will once again have access to high-quality data.**
> Navdeep Bains

The Conservatives replaced the long-form census with the National Household Survey. The response rate declined from 93.5 per cent in 2006 to 68.6 per cent in 2011.

The new Liberal government, however, is giving priority to evidence-based decision-making instead of ideology, said Navdeep Bains, the minister of innovation, science and economic development.

"Today, Canadians are reclaiming their right to accurate and more reliable information," Bains told a news conference. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Liberal minister fired from cabinet

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

N.S. MP failed to appear in court to testify in assault case

Former Environment Minister Andrew Younger
THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil says Environment Minister Andrew Younger has been relieved of his duties and kicked out of the governing Liberal caucus.

Thursday night's announcement came after Younger didn't show up to testify at a trial for a woman who was accused of assaulting him.

Younger says he didn't appear in court because of a law that states sitting members of the legislature cannot be called to testify in civil and criminal matters without being asked to waive the exemption.

The judge dropped the charge against Tara Gault, who pleaded not guilty to the charge stemming from an alleged assault on or about Oct. 22, 2013, the day the Liberal government took power after the last provincial election.

McNeil says Younger did not give him accurate information about the situation and he wanted to make sure Nova Scotians have not been misled.

He says he has lost confidence in Younger. "There's a level of trust, if your employer was asking questions, they would expect you to give forthright (answers)," McNeil told a hastily called Thursday evening news conference.

"Unfortunately that wasn't the case." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Migrants will number three million by 2016: EU

GLOBAL POLITICS

Nations want flexibility in spending during crisis

The European Union is predicting that 3 million migrants could arrive in the 28-nation bloc by the end of next year, with the refugee emergency already proving a stern test of EU border and reception capacities.

The arrivals are imposing costs for shelter, rescue operations and border security, but the EU estimates that the refugees are likely to bring economic benefits within a few years, notably in Germany, one of the preferred destinations for many people.

EU autumn economic forecasts released on Thursday show that based on current migrant entries and a "technical assumption" about future flows, arrival rates for migrants are unlikely to slow before 2017.

Despite the figures of refugee increases, the European Commission predicted that the population across the 28 EU nations would only rise by about 0.4 per cent. No obvious impact on employments levels is likely, it said.

"You cannot say that this influx of refugees is likely to have a negative impact, or some kind of a shift of kicking other people out of the labour market," the EU's top economics and finance official, Pierre Moscovici, said.

700K

More than 700,000 people have come to Europe seeking sanctuary or jobs so far this year.

However the EU said the real impact on national budgets is difficult to predict, given a lack of complete and reliable data about exactly who is arriving in the bloc and whether they are staying.

Most people are arriving in Europe through Italy and Greece, while Hungary and Austria have been affected by heavy migrant flows. Germany and Sweden are also feeling the impact.

Those nations, among others, want the EU to apply its budget rules with flexibility, taking into account Europe's biggest refugee emergency in well over half a century, and avoid reprimanding member states for excessive spending and deficits. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MYANMAR ELECTIONS

'It's a very simple message'

Myanmar opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi said Thursday that she will be the true power above the country's president if her party wins historic elections this Sunday, circumventing a constitutional clause that bars her from the top job.

"It's a very simple message," Suu Kyi said, when reporters pressed her to explain what she meant. While another member of her National League for Democracy party would hold the presidential title, "I'll be above the president... I'll run the government." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

1 Aung San Suu Kyi speaks
Myanmar's opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi addresses the media at a press conference at her home in Yangon, Myanmar. MARK BAKER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS.

2 National League for Democracy
Supporters of Suu Kyi's National League for Democracy hold up their hands during a NLD rally in Yangon. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

3 Rally in Yangon
While the NLD party is expected to triumph at key elections this year, Suu Kyi's pathway to the presidency is blocked by a clause in Myanmar's constitution. AFP/GETTY IMAGES

CONSERVATION

Rhino arrives safely

A U.S.-born Sumatran rhino ate leaves and wallowed in mud at an Indonesian sanctuary Thursday as the U.S. formally handed over the animal in hopes he will have offspring and help save his critically endangered species from extinction.

The eight-year-old rhino is now in quarantine at Way Kambas National Park after travelling more than 16,000 kilometres from a zoo in Cincinnati, Ohio, to the Indonesian capital, Jakarta.

U.S. consular official Robert Ewing delivered the 1,800-pound rhino to Tachrir Fathoni, director general for Conservation of Natural Resources and Ecosystem at Indonesia's Ministry of Environment and Forestry, in a ceremony at the Sumatran Rhino Sanctuary in the park in Lampung province.

"Thank you so much for the warm kindness (of the American people) for allowing the return of the one and only (Sumatran) rhino in the U.S.," Fathoni said.

Ewing noted the importance of Indonesia's biodiversity and the environment not just to Indonesians but to the world. It is hoped that Harapan can mate with one or more of the three females at Way Kambas.

An estimated 100 Sumatran rhinos, also known as the "hairy rhino," remain in the world and nine are in captivity. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Harapan the Sumatran rhino
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

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METROJET

Russia, Egypt dismiss theory that bomb caused plane crash

Five days after a Russian jetliner broke apart high above the Sinai, Russia and Egypt on Thursday dismissed Western suggestions that a terrorist bomb may have caused the crash that killed 224 people, saying the speculation was a rush to judgment.

British Prime Minister David Cameron said he had grounded all British flights to and from the Sinai Peninsula because of "intelligence and information" indicating a bomb was the probable reason a Metrojet Airbus A321-200 plane had crashed in the desert.

President Barack Obama said the U.S. was taking "very seriously" the possibility that a bomb brought down the plane.

His comments, in an interview with a Seattle radio station, followed an earlier statement by White House spokesman Josh Earnest, who said the U.S. can't rule out the possibility of terrorism. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SPECULATION

President Obama reacts
President Barack Obama said the U.S. was taking "very seriously" the possibility that a bomb brought down the plane. ISIL claimed responsibility for bringing down the plane, but Russian and Egyptian officials say the claim was not credible.

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Weak loonie shouldn't mean staying at home

TRAVEL

Tour firms offer bonuses for quick sale of packages

A weaker loonie means the price for Canadians to escape the snow and ice for the warmth of the sun this winter is going to be more costly than it has been in recent years.

But travel experts say that planning ahead and starting your search for the perfect beach holiday now will save you money.

Travel agent Omar Guechtal of the Flight Centre travel agency says booking early is the surest way to save this year.

He says tour companies have been looking to sell out their packages as early as possible.

"So what they've done is they've incentivized their packages with early booking bonuses, reduced deposits, added perks, free seat selection or other bonuses that you can get by booking early."

All-inclusive vacations limit out-of-pocket expenses in U.S. dollars on the trip. CONTRIBUTED

Guechtal says tour companies sign contracts for hotels and flights negotiated in U.S. dollars, even though the packages they sell are priced in Canadian currency.

Choosing an all-inclusive vacation or a cruise can be another way to save because you will limit the out-of-pocket expenses you might have to pay while on your trip.

In addition to booking early, Guechtal says Canadians can also look to save money by paying for amusement park tickets or extra excursions that may not be included in an all-inclusive package ahead of time.

If you can pay in Canadian dollars before leaving you may avoid costly credit card foreign exchange fees or surcharges that come with using bank machines to withdraw cash.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

INVESTING

Five provinces ease crowdfunding rules

Five of Canada's securities regulators have released a joint policy that makes it possible for businesses and individuals in five provinces to raise money and sell stakes in their businesses through crowdfunding.

Websites like Kickstarter, Indiegogo and Patreon have made it easier for U.S. entrepreneurs to raise money from large numbers of people at a time. Unlike those crowd-funding platforms, which provide no equity in the ensuing product, the new rules pave the way for Canadian businesses to use crowdfunding to sell equity.

Now Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have exempted crowdfunding from some of the requirements of traditional fundraising methods such as an IPO.

Crowd-funding platforms will have to meet certain criteria in order to register as a funding portal, and will be responsible for background checks and other due diligence.

Investors will be limited in how much they can invest relative to their income and net worth.

On Friday, the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission issued its own similar rules for equity crowdfunding, which will come into effect in mid-2016 and also mandate registration for crowdfunding outlets.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

Telus cutting 1,500 jobs

Wireless provider Telus Corp. is cutting 1,500 positions, saving as much as $125 million each year. At the same time, Telus told shareholders it would raise their dividend payments by five per cent to 44 cents per share, starting in January.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

market minute

DOLLAR 75.94¢ (-0.07¢)

TSX 13,558.78 (-103.04)

OIL $45.20 US (-$1.12)

GOLD $1,104.20 US (-$2.00)

NATURAL GAS: $2.364 US (+10.2¢)
DOW JONES: 17,863.43 (-4.15)

INITIAL PUBLIC OFFERING

Hydro One makes solid debut on TSX

Hydro One made a solid debut Thursday on the Toronto stock market in one of the largest initial public offerings in Canada in 15 years, even as controversy continued to swirl over the Ontario government's plan to partially sell the giant transmission utility.

The company's stock closed at $21.62, up 5.46 per cent or $1.12 from the IPO price of $20.50, with more than 18 million shares sold.

> **It will mean billions of dollars being reinvested into our economy.**
> Charles Sousa

Finance Minister Charles Sousa said he was pleased to see the offering of Hydro One shares was being "well-received" on the markets.

"Every uptick on the market is an indication the future offerings will net even greater proceeds benefiting all Ontarians," Sousa said. "It will mean billions of dollars being reinvested into our economy, into building new assets, into producing greater revenues."

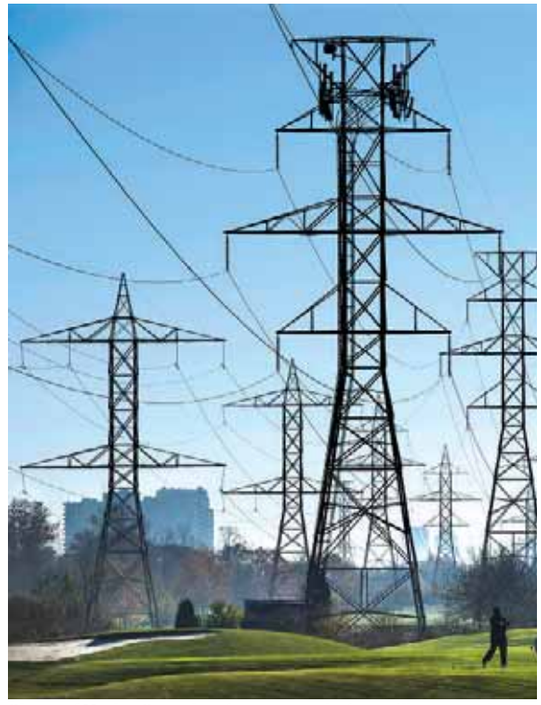
The Opposition Progressive Conservatives said the governing Liberals wanted the Hydro One sale to "give a big payout to their well-heeled friends," while the New Democrats warned it would drive up electricity rates and urged the government to reverse course.

Stephen Lingard, senior vice-president at investment firm Franklin Templeton Solutions, said it's not a guarantee that electricity rates will go higher as a result of the privatization of Hydro One.

"Generally speaking, privatization focuses on maximizing profits, and sometimes that means raising prices, but it can also mean squeezing costs and focusing on margins," Lingard said. "So it's not an automatic that prices go up, but certainly that would be a concern initially for ratepayers."

The government plans to use the estimated $1.66 billion generated by selling 13.6 per cent of its stake in Hydro One to help fund transit and infrastructure projects.

THE CANADIAN PRESS



Share of Hydro One, the giant transmission utility, rose above its IPO price on its first day on the TSX. THE CANADIAN PRESS

ENERGY EAST PIPELINE

TransCanada nixes terminal in Quebec

Quebec will no longer host an oil export terminal for TransCanada's controversial Energy East Pipeline, the Calgary-based company announced Thursday.

Six months after abandoning a proposal to build a terminal northeast of Quebec City, TransCanada said it would amend its proposal to the National Energy Board to include a new route for the pipeline.

The company made the decision after "conducting thorough studies and consulting with many local communities," Energy East president John Soini said in an interview.

The pipeline is unpopular in Quebec and served as political fodder during the recent federal election campaign for the anti-Energy East Bloc Quebecois, who said the project brings only risks to the province with none of the benefits.

While ditching plans to export crude from Quebec, TransCanada said it will ensure refineries in Montreal and Quebec City are still able to access domestic crude from Energy East. The $12-billion project is scheduled to be completed by 2020.

Soini said the pipeline will have 500 long-term jobs and add $1.19 billion to the Quebec government's coffers during the exploitation phase.

But Premier Philippe Couillard said the company has yet to demonstrate the economic benefits for his province.

Couillard reiterated Quebec cannot just serve as a passageway for TransCanada, which is expected to file detailed plans for Energy East by the end of the year.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

THE ROUTE

Endpoint is Saint John

TransCanada plans to build a 4,600-kilometre pipeline to transport 1.1 million barrels of Alberta crude as far east as Saint John, N.B, home to Irving Oil's massive refinery and the only planned export terminal for the project.

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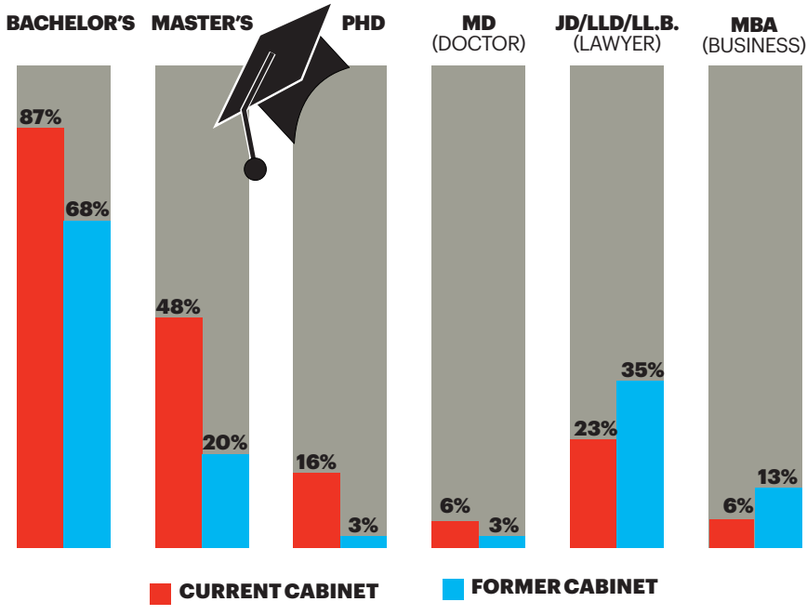
metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Weekend, November 6-8, 2015

THE BIG THING: THE STACKED CABINET

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has been packing his front bench with a high-powered cast of highly qualified MPs — a lieutenant-colonel, a CEO, an astronaut — but how does the expertise in the new, leaner 31-seat cabinet compare to the 40-member team the Conservatives had when the writ dropped in August? We crunched the numbers on members' scholastic success, then and now.



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CABINET HIGHLIGHTS

KIRSTY DUNCAN
MINISTER OF SCIENCE
Holds a Ph.D. in geography; member of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007

JANE PHILPOTT
MINISTER OF HEALTH
Family physician for more than 25 years, including nine in West Africa; holds a master's degree in public health

JOHN McCALLUM
MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP
Former chief economist of the Royal Bank of Canada and dean of arts at McGill University

When we legalize pot, let's be chill about it

Diane Baker Mason
For Metro

In the opening scene of the 1994 film Pulp Fiction, two affable hired killers discuss the legalization of marijuana. Vincent (the well-travelled one) tries to distill the complicated Dutch hash-bar laws by describing pot as "legal but not 100 per cent legal." You can own it, he explains, and you can smoke it, but you can't buy or sell it. His companion is baffled. Why does it have to be so complicated?

Sound, enforceable legislation will take thought, care and time.

Why indeed? While this scene from a 20-year-old movie remains applicable to many Canadians' contemporary understanding of cannabis users (that they are criminals using a dangerous drug), most Canadians believe that pot should be legalized. Many point to the relative harmlessness of the drug and to its many medical uses. Those benefits were recognized in Canada by the Marijuana for Medical Purposes Regulations issued by Health Canada in 2013, a narrow decriminalization that took years of legislative caterwauling to bring into force. Since then, there's been no serious chance of further decriminalization. At least, until now.

Now that we have our shiny new prime minister, the issue of legalizing pot is again being passed around. Legal, regulated use is now only a matter of time, although Trudeau cannot say how much time. When asked recently, he indicated it could take years to draft, create and implement the new regulatory scheme. After decades of debate — during which many other jurisdictions globally have decriminalized and even completely legalized cannabis — are we in for another long wait?

Probably. Legalizing pot is not simply a matter of amending the Criminal Code, as Pierre Trudeau's government did in 1968, removing prohibitions against homosexuality and birth control. Pot smoking has an intoxicating effect (obviously), and there do need to be controls on its use and sale. The nature and scope of the controls need to be identified and legislated. Then there is the tax revenue: an entire legislative scheme of collection, reporting and distribution. There's far more to it than just declaring pot to be "legal but not 100% legal."

Sound, enforceable legislation will take thought, care and time. Legalization is on the new government's agenda. At this point, there is no reason to keep asking the PM when pot will be legalized. The legislation will come in time. In the meantime, we should all just chill out.

And if you have difficulty chilling? Well, I know a guy...

Diane Baker Mason is a Toronto-based novelist, writer and retired lawyer.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD
metroview

Liberal-arts majors have a kindred spirit in the prime minister

Liberal-arts majors, rejoice. You've got a prime minister in your ranks.

The situation reminds me of this thing I had about bananas when I was a kid. One day, I ate a banana, and then when I lay on my stomach and tried to touch my toes to my head, I succeeded. It was an early ah-ha moment, and I continued to eat bananas before trying to touch my toes to my head until I lost interest. But it was a sad day, years later, when I ate a banana and broke my back.

So, Justin Trudeau may have a bachelor's degree in literature from McGill and one in education from the University of British Columbia, but he didn't win by investing in his education: he won by investing in being a Trudeau and then running a damn fine campaign.

That's not to say there's nothing of benefit to a banana, or an arts degree. In fact, Trudeau's education appears to be playing a role in his leadership style.

Take his exhaustive attention to ensuring a diversity of voices — plurality being an ethic at the heart of liberal arts — via the most diverse cabinet we've ever seen. And before you scream "Quota!" let's note that pundits are generally cheering the ministers' depth of experience in their respective portfolios, bemoaning only — if anything — that some lack experience in politics.

Take also Trudeau's keen sense of dramatic scene-setting. The tedium of a swearing-in ceremony (watching 30 people repeat the same words and shake the same hands) became a jaunty celebration for the masses gathered outside Rideau Hall, drawing comparisons to the Kennedys' Camelot. If it is just political propaganda, it's of the public-inclusive, liberal-arts variety.

He made the connection himself, to school-aged kids, telling them his education degree informed his plans to "listen as much as he speaks" and be a mentor-prime minister, helping the cabinet members and Canadians "solve those challenges and get their answers."

Of course, personality informs leadership. And it's also not always true that degrees predict a prime minister's leadership style. Last time, we got an economist who ran the country based on ideology and hated data so much that he cut the long-form census and hollowed out science libraries.

But don't worry: the census is back. Which means that if you do happen to have an arts degree, and you do wonder what that means for your career prospects over time, just keep an eye on Statistics Canada. It'll be tracking that.

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Your essential daily news

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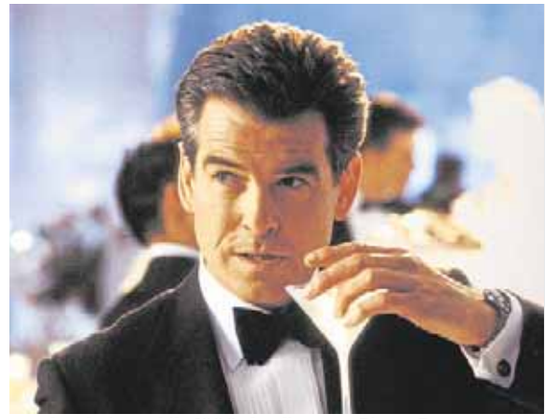


While most people would say Sean Connery made the best 007, Richard Crouse's vote goes to Roger Moore. Daniel Craig is also a popular choice, while 1990s leading man Pierce Brosnan seems to be a less popular choice with the general public. HANDOUTS

Who made the best Bond?

MOVIE STARS

People's favourite 007 often the one they saw first

Richard Crouse
For Metro Canada

Who's your favourite James Bond? This weekend Daniel Craig suits up again, taking his fourth spin as the super spy in Spectre. The film's overseas reviews have been very strong and it will likely dominate the weekend's box office but who among us would call Craig the best Bond?

I have a theory that the Bond nearest and dearest to your heart is the first 007 you saw projected on the big screen.

Popular consensus tells us that Sean Connery, who played the role in six films spanning 1962 To 1971 and then once again in 1983's non-officially sanctioned Never Say Never Again, is the best Bond. As cool as Connery was he isn't my top of the pops. Dr. No, the first 007 movie, came out before I was born and Connery more or less permanently parked his Aston Martin around the time I entered grade two.

The Bond that made the biggest impression on me was Roger Moore. I know critically speaking he wasn't the most beloved Bond. Pauline Kael once wrote about him, "Roger Moore is dutiful and passive as Bond; his clothes are neatly pressed and he shows up for work, like an office manager who is turning into dead wood but hanging on to collect his pension."

I also know that hardcore spy fans considered Moore too well-mannered and pleasant to be effective, but he was my first, and I guess the first cut is the deepest because I still have a fondness for his breezy take on the super agent.

But that's just me.

To get a broader picture I did a highly scientific Double-Blind Bond Peer Reviewed In House Clinical Trial (in other words I asked my Facebook and Twitter friends) to determine the world's favourite 007 portrayer.

The contenders were Connery, George Lazenby, Moore, Timothy Dalton, Pierce Brosnan and Craig — everyone who has played Bond in one of the 24 officially sanctioned 007 movies.

Several contributors brought up others like Barry Nelson, who played James Bond in a 1954 television adaptation of Casino Royale. Also mentioned were David Niven's turn as Bond in 1967's Casino Royale and another actor who has never played 007. "Clive Owen," suggested one poster, "once they get around to casting him in the next one."

After eliminating the unofficial 007s and non-Bonds a team of experts (OK, it was just me reading through the posts as Live and Let Die played on the TV behind me) sifted through the results.

Pollsters said Brosnan Is Not Enough to '90s Bond Pierce Brosnan who came in dead last with just 1.9 per cent of the vote.

"I liked Pierce Brosnan because he embodied all the others combined," wrote one positive poster. "Charm, humour, ruthlessness, cunning."

Timothy Dalton earned 3.9 per cent with one respondent saying, "If there really was an agent who was an assassin with a licence to kill ... it would be him."

At 9.8 per cent, George Lazenby fared better than Brosnan and Dalton even though he only made one 007 film.

My favourite Bond came in third with 15.6 per cent, just behind Daniel Craig's 21.5 per cent. "Craig gets me wanting to watch whereas the others are placeholders," wrote a Facebook friend, "Sorry."

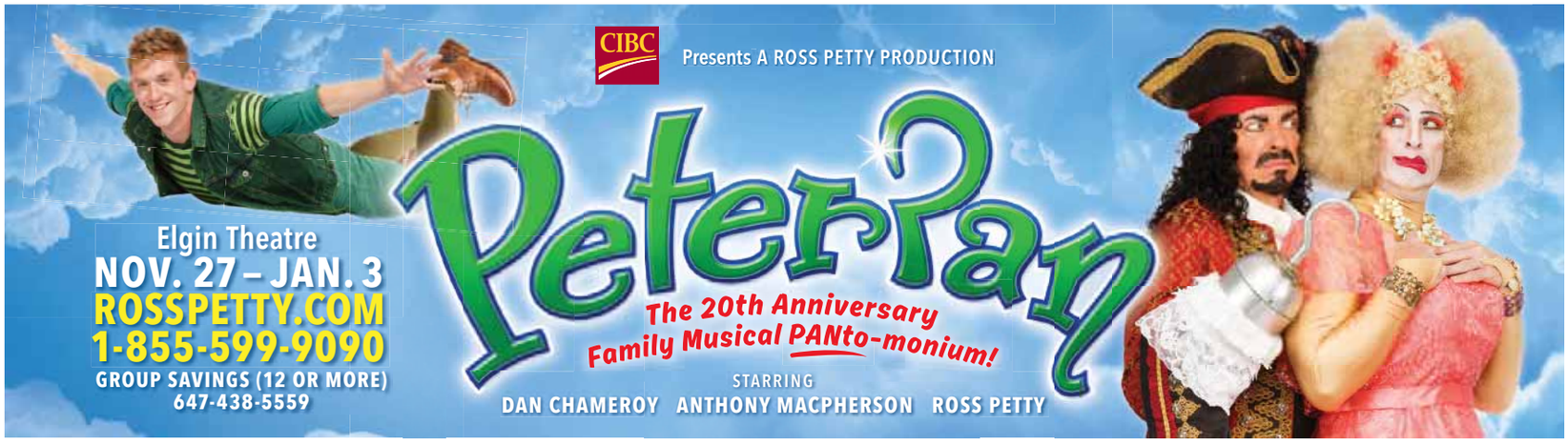
By far and away, Sean Connery was the winner with a whopping 39.2 per cent of the vote. This comment seems to sum up the reason why people like him. "Sean Connery because Sean Connery!"

Who is your favourite Bond? Chime in at @metropicks.

MOVIE RATINGS by Richard Crouse

Spectre ★★★★
The Peanuts Movie ★★★
Miss You Already ★★★

HOW RATING WORKS	
★★★★	SEE IT
★★★	WORTHWHILE
★★	UP TO YOU
★	SKIP IT



MUSIC

A short history of the James Bond songs that finished second

Alan Cross
For Metro Canada

Spectre, the 24th movie in the James Bond franchise, has its North American premiere today. As usual, the film begins with an OTT action sequence (shot with 1,500 extras in Mexico City) before segueing into Sam Smith's Writing on the Wall and the opening titles. It's rumoured his song, written in half an hour with collaborator Jimmy Napes, beat out submissions by Lana Del Rey, Ed Sheeran, Florence and the Machine, Coldplay, Ed Sheeran, Bruno Mars, Muse, Radiohead (the bookies' favourite) and half a dozen others.

Having your song chosen as a theme in the most successful movie franchise is a big honour, not to mention lucrative.

Smith's Writing became the first Bond theme to reach No. 1 in the U.K., something that even Paul McCartney couldn't manage with Live and Let Die (the BEST Bond theme ever. Don't even try to argue with me.)

So these songs are gone forever, right? Not a chance. As with most things, what might have been is a just a YouTube search away.

Del Rey, Sheeran, Florence et al have joined a long list of Bond theme also-rans. Rejected Bond songs would make an interesting album.

Debbie Harry's submission for For Your Eyes Only (1981) was passed over Sheena Easton's song of the same name, which just happened to be co-written by Bill Conti, the composer of the film's score. Alice Cooper really wanted the song gig for The Man with the Golden Gun (1974) but he should have probably thrown in more lyrical references to the movie. He lost out to Lulu who had her song written and arranged by John Barry, who scored the whole film.

In retrospect, it would have been much cooler to hear Johnny Cash sing over the opening credits of Thunderball (1965) instead of Tom Jones, but at the time, Cash's image didn't exactly scream James Bond. He was in good company, though. Dionne Warwick and Shirley Bassey also had their songs rejected.

There was a ton of competition for Tomorrow Never Dies (1997) with KD Lang, Pulp, The Fixx, Saint Etienne and Swan Lee all submitting songs for consideration but they all lost to Sheryl Crow.

Other Bond losers include, Laura Branigan (Octopussy, 1983), Ace of Base (Goldeneye, 1995) and Straw (The World Is Not Enough, 1999) and Shirley Bassey (again, this time for Quantum of Solace, 2008). There are also stories of Bond flirting by the Pet Shop Boys, The Pretenders and even the Beach Boys.

SIR WILLIAM STEPHENSON

The real-life spy who inspired Fleming

One of the world's greatest spies was an operative for England with an affinity for martinis, a suave rapport with elite power players, and an uncanny ability to infiltrate and eliminate threats.

This isn't the fictional James Bond we're talking about, but the real-life Sir William Stephenson — a quiet Canadian code-named Intrepid who many believe inspired author Ian Fleming to create his over-the-top British spy hero.

"Without doubt, Fleming's idea of James Bond is based on Sir William," says Cord Hart, a former CIA operative and U.S. Army colonel who got to know Stephenson through intelligence circles in the early '80s.

With the latest instalment in the bombastic 007 franchise, Spectre, hitting theatres Friday, descendants and admirers of the late Winnipeg-born war hero say Stephenson's impressive exploits are too little known.

"I always tell people he's the most famous Winnipegger of all time," says Heartland Travel and Tours owner Don Finkbeiner, whose tours include a stop at a bronze life-size statue of Stephenson near the Manitoba legislature.

Sir William Stephenson. THE CANADIAN PRESS

"Nobody even comes close. And I would suggest he's the most famous Canadian of all time."

Of course, the fact that many of Stephenson's activities were clandestine makes for murky claims to the Bond title. Not to mention the fact Fleming has said he based the character on several people he met throughout the course of his wartime naval career.

But advocates seize on Fleming's oft-cited comment that Bond was "a highly romanticized version of a true spy." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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The behind-the-scenes drama on the Spectre set included the secretive script being leaked in the Sony hack. HANDOUT

The off-screen drama

SPECTRE

If you don't like problems, don't become a film producer

Before James Bond could even get himself into his first pickle, a shadowy international threat loomed.

About a week into shooting Spectre, James Bond producers Barbara Broccoli and Michael G. Wilson got some bad news.

Not only had a draft of the highly secretive script been leaked in the infamous Sony hack, but it came along with a slew of private communications about the film, highlighting its third act problems, multiple rewrites, ballooning budget and one very significant spoiler.

Broccoli and Wilson didn't find this out from the Internet or even Sony — the distributor and co-financier on Spectre.

They read about it in a newspaper. With phone lines and email servers down, they couldn't even get in touch with their partners in the immediate aftermath.

"It was a bit tricky for us," Broccoli acknowledged.

But beyond making sure the copyrighted script was taken offline, she said they essentially just proceeded with making the film.

"You know what they say, you shouldn't see how a sausage is made," Wilson said in a recent phone interview from Mexico City.

He and his step-sister Broccoli were in the capital to attend a premiere of Spectre, the 24th in the 53-year-old film series, which bows in North America this Friday.

The purported drama that the hacked emails exposed is no more or less than they've experienced on any other film in the franchise, noted Broccoli in the phone interview.

"They're challenging films to make because of the size of what we do," she said. "I always say, if you don't like problems, don't become a film producer."

Spectre certainly doesn't skimp on size. The film, which finds the martini-swilling spy on a multi-continent quest, opens with a complicated tracking shot in the streets of Mexico City for the Day of the Dead parade, featuring over 1,500 extras dressed and painted to perfection.

It required 1,500 unique costumes, 75 costumers, five months of preparation, two helicopters and police escorts for the buses used to transport the extras.

And that's only one of the film's exotic set pieces. There's also the 400 tons of man-made snow that they had to use in Austria, the 18 nights they spent shooting a car chase in Rome, and the sand storms and 113-degree temperatures they found in Erfoud, Morocco.

The film's budget is reported to be near $250 million.

But Bond is big business and the series has been on an upswing.

The last film, Skyfall, was produced for a reported $150-$200 million and became the highest grossing Bond film ever with over $1.1 billion in ticket sales worldwide.

Spectre sees the return of Skyfall director Sam Mendes and star Daniel Craig in his fourth film as 007. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Now playing

ACTION & ADVENTURE

Spectre

Director: Sam Mendes
Starring: Daniel Craig, Christoph Waltz

A cryptic message from Bond's past sends him on a trail to uncover a sinister organisation. While M battles political forces to keep the secret service alive, Bond peels back the layers of deceit to reveal the terrible truth behind Spectre.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 66% Audience: + 99%

DRAMA

Miss You Already

Director: Catherine Hardwicke
Starring: Toni Collette, Drew Barrymore

An powerful story following two best friends, Milly and Jess, as they navigate life's highs and lows. Inseparable since they were young girls, they can't remember a time they didn't share everything.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 71% Audience: + 91%

DRAMA

Life

Director: Anton Corbijn
Starring: Dane DeHaan, Robert Pattinson

This drama tells the story of photographer Dennis Stock who convinced a rebellious young actor on the cusp of stardom, James Dean, to allow him to shoot him for LIFE Magazine.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 66% Audience: + 89%

WESTERN/DRAMA

The Keeping Room

Director: Daniel Barber
Starring: Brit Marling, Hailee Steinfeld

In this radically reimagined American Western set towards the end of the Civil War, Southerner Augusta encounters two renegade, drunken soldiers who are on a mission of pillage and violence.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 67% Audience: 62%

ANIMATION/KIDS

The Peanuts Movie

Director: Steve Martino
Starring: Noah Schnapp, Hadley Belle Miller

Charlie Brown, Snoopy, Lucy, Linus and the rest of the beloved Peanuts gang make their big-screen debut, like they've never been seen before, in state of the art 3D animation.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 85% Audience: + 97%

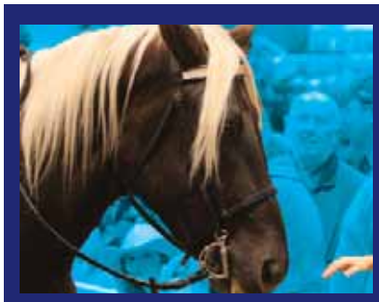
DRAMA/ACTION

THEEB

Director: Naji Abu Nowar
Starring: Jacir Eid Al-Hwietat, Hussein Salameh Al-Sweilhiyeen

In the Ottoman province of Hijaz during World War I, a young Bedouin boy, Theeb, experiences a hastened coming of age as he embarks, uninvited but eager for adventure, on a perilous desert journey with his elder brother.

ROTTEN TOMATOES™ SCORE
Critics: 94% Audience: + 77%



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Toni Collette and Drew Barrymore star in Catherine Hardwicke's Miss You Already, a 'life-affirming' movie about friendship, love and a cancer diagnosis

Drew Barrymore and Toni Collette are two inseparable girlfriends in Miss You Already. CONTRIBUTED

Drew all grown up

Drew Barrymore gets excited about ideas, work, memories and friends, drops an occasional F-bomb, adores her kids, "these baby girls who are everything in my universe" and wishes "every billboard in the world" carried the message that life begins at 40.

In September, the morning after Catherine Hardwicke's dramedy Miss You Already had its world premiere at the Toronto International Film Festival, Barrymore praised Miss You Already co-star Toni Collette, who plays self-absorbed wild child Milly to Barrymore's rock-steady Jess, two longtime girlfriends dealing with motherhood, relationships and unexpected tragedy.

Miss You Already opens in theatres today.

"I feel like I've been like Milly in my life at some points, but I'm much more like Jess now in my life," says Barrymore. Her often-tumultuous childhood led to rebellious teenage and young adult years. It's all out there; her 1990 autobiography Little Girl Lost, details everything.

"Little Girl Lost is a let-me-try-to-put-my-life-back-together

"(Miss You Already is) such a love story for women and all being done by women.
Drew Barrymore

written by, honestly, another man (Todd Gold). He did the typing, I did the talking," says Barrymore.

She's written her own story now, a series of essays and reflections on various stages of her life called Wildflower. An early version of the book peeks out from her tote bag, the pages dog-eared from proofreading.

"I think you will be very surprised," Barrymore says of Wildflower. "It's a shuffled deck. It goes from (age) 5 to 35 to 7 to 18."

Married since 2012 to art consultant Will Kopelman, the couple has two daughters: Olive, soon to be 3, and Frankie, 17 months. Since motherhood she's pulled back from acting to focus on family. "I can't tell you the beauty of how much room that makes for other things," Barrymore says of stepping away from the "5 a.m. to midnight" world of acting. "It makes room for me to be the kind of parent I want to be."

But she does occasionally say yes, even if, as with Miss You Already, the timing isn't ideal.

"That's why I was so angry when (Miss You Already) came my way," Barrymore says. "I had just had my second daughter, Frankie, and I was like, 'I can't even read this. How am I going to do this?'"

Making a film that was "such a love story for women and all being done by women, I got really drawn into what that would be," Barrymore said. "And maybe my girls when they're older can watch this and the whole womanly aspect of it, (which) felt really safe and appropriate for where I was at that moment in my life."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Toni gets teary eyed

Miss You Already aims to bob along at a buoyant, lively pace even while staring intently at the reality of a cancer diagnosis.

Toni Collette's Milly flashes bartenders and commandeers cabs for impromptu roadtrips, while also dealing frankly with hair loss, life-altering surgery and sudden bouts of nausea.

Director Catherine Hardwicke recalled when her father had cancer he still made "wicked jokes, even at the last minute." She and Collette talked to cancer survivors to ensure they were getting other details right, and they were validated by the response of those who have seen the film.

Still, the movie is definitely a three-hankie weeper. Even Collette can't help crying when talking about her character, Milly, the former wild-child mother of two whose world shatters when she's diagnosed with breast cancer.

"Every time — I'm going to start crying thinking about it, sorry — every time we got to the scene where Milly has to tell her daughter goodbye, I just couldn't (do) it," said Collette, mom of a son and daughter, wiping away tears. "It still

"It's a film about friendship and love — all you have to do is be human to relate.
Toni Collette

gets to me. It must be one of the hardest things you'd have to do if you were facing your own mortality."

It's also a story about enduring female friendship. Milly's lifelong sidekick Jess (Drew Barrymore) is her rock, but even their bond is tested by Milly's illness and changes in Jess's life. When Collette hears people are compelled to call their best friend as soon as they came out of the theatre, "Drew and I are like, high five, we've done our job."

Australian Collette, 43, first captivated moviegoers as marriage-minded, ABBA-loving Muriel Heslop in Muriel's Wedding in 1994. She was nominated for an Oscar for The Sixth Sense and went on to star in About a Boy, Little Miss Sunshine and The Way Way Back, while earning critical praise and a Golden Globe for handling multiple roles in Diablo Cody's Showtime TV series, The United States of Tara.

"I have somehow avoided categorization. I remember when I first went to Hollywood when Muriel's Wedding came out ... and people were sending similar characters to Muriel," she says. "But I knew not to play the same character. Once I've done it, it's out of my system," she says.

The character in Miss You Already that she initially wanted to play was Jess. "(But) Jennifer Aniston was playing my part and for whatever reason she dropped out. A friend said you should be playing the hot mess and I said, "You're f–ing right!" I rang the producer and said, 'It's over. I'm playing Milly.'"

THE CANADIAN PRESS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

THE TV DINNER JESSICA ALLEN

"Friends can throw down with each other in the most amazing way, and recover in a different way than lovers."

I was part of a chain of swollen-eyed, wet-sleeved viewers who exited the theatre after a September screening of Miss You Already, a film about two best friends who cope with infertility, infidelity and a cancer diagnosis. Part of me felt angry, like I'd just been emotionally manipulated. And, having seen movies like Love Story, Terms of Endearment, Steel Magnolias and Beaches, I should have known better. The other part just wanted to run up to the closest stranger and say, "Hold me!"

But don't go see Miss You Already, which opens on Friday, just because you need a good cry. See it because Toni Colette, as the wild free spirit, Milly, and Drew Barrymore, as the more firmly anchored Jess, deliver exceptional performances of their flawed, complicated characters. See it because there's been plenty of talk about gender inequality in Hollywood but here's a movie starring two women, directed by a woman, written by a woman, about women.

"A very long female friendship is as profound as a relationship with your children and your spouse," Barrymore recently told the New York Times, "and yet it's really given third credit. Friends can throw down with each other in the most amazing way, and recover in a different way than lovers."

Truth. If Simon told me that I had two weeks to lose four pounds in order to get to an arbitrary weight that I chose back in January, I'd murder him. But my friend, a female, did. And I appreciate it.

We made a pact some 10 months ago to lose the 15 pounds we'd gained at our new jobs. We take turns making healthy lunches. We record our calorie intakes. We send encouraging texts. She reached her goal months ago. But I still have those four pounds. (Believe me: I could stand to lose more, but being thin would be off-brand for me.) It's crunch time and she's had to resort to tough love, like suggesting I cut out at least 200 calories a day by not drinking wine with dinner.

THE MOVIE: Miss You Already

THE MEAL: Roasted sea bream

That's the stupidest (most-reasonable) thing I've ever heard. Wine isn't my problem. Neither is breakfast (oatmeal) or lunch (salad.) It's dinner, mostly because I eat two of them.

While I was working on my miss-you-already-pizza-and-pasta-meal-plan for the week ahead, I leafed through The French Women Don't Get Fat Cookbook, written by Mireille Guiliano. I decided to make her recipe for roasted sea bream with vegetables.

It's simplicity sounded too good to be true: toss chopped onion, potato, yellow pepper and tomato in olive oil, salt and pepper, and bake. Add the fish on top with some lemon and bake a little longer. Serve with fresh cilantro sprinkled on top. It was both delicious and satisfying.

Like clockwork, we got up after finishing our first plate to refill in the kitchen. That's when it occurred to me: the recipe was for four people, not two.

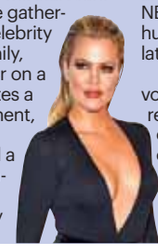
French women don't get fat because they don't have a second dinner.

Jessica Allen is the digital correspondent on CTV's The Social.

TV PREMIERE

Khloe to chat with kin and confidantes over Kocktails

Khloe Kardashian's new talk show has a premiere date. The FYI channel says Kocktails With Khloe will start Jan. 20. It will be the gathering place for celebrity friends and family, who will join her on a set that replicates a home environment, complete with dining area and a functional kitchen. There will be eight weekly episodes, FYI said Thursday.



She's been part of her family's TV empire in shows including Keeping Up With the Kardashians and Khloe and Lamar, which featured NBA star Lamar Odom, her husband from whom she later filed for divorce.

She recently halted divorce proceedings as Odom recovers from an apparent overdose of cocaine and other drugs at a Nevada brothel, where last month he was found unconscious. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ANGIE TRIBECA

It's a mega-marathon start for TBS comedy

The TBS comedy Angie Tribeca is getting a launch even NASA might envy.

Starring Rashida Jones in the title role, the zany police procedural will let viewers binge-watch its entire first season by airing all 10 half-hour episodes from start to finish not once, but five times in a row, commercial-free. This 25-hour marathon begins Sunday, Jan. 17. Then on Monday, Jan. 25, TBS will begin rolling out what it calls the series' "second" season — 10 more half-hours that will air weekly.

The series follows a squad of LAPD detectives who investigate cases ranging from the murder of a ventriloquist to a rash of baker suicides. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Rashida Jones. MICHAEL KOVAC/GETTY IMAGES FOR VANITY FAIR

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4 ADAPTATIONS AS TRUE TO THEIR ORIGINS AS THE PEANUTS MOVIE

Not every adaptation of a show stays faithful. With The Peanuts Movie hitting theatres — and in a beautifully exact (if high-def) simulacrum of the strip's storied TV specials, complete with actual kids doing the voices — here's a look at other movies that got it right **MATT PRIGGE/METRO NEW YORK**

1 And Now for Something Completely Different (1971)

Source: Monty Python's Flying Circus

As a troupe and individually, Monty Python made several landmark films that kept the spirit of their experimental sketch show without actually being them. But their first movie was exactly like the show. In fact it was simply a best-of sketch cavalcade, with greatest hits (the parrot sketch, The Lumberjack Song, Upper-Class Twit of the Year, etc.) re-shot, and with no laugh-track. The reason? They wanted to invade America and no one had heard of them. Monty Python and the Holy Grail would take care of that better than their cinematic debut, but it's still a fine entrypoint for newbs.

2 The Naked Gun' (1988)

Source: Police Squad!

Doing a film of Police Squad! made sense: The show, which ran for only six episodes in 1982, found David and Jerry Zucker plus Jim Abraham (a.k.a. ZAZ) trying to do for TV what they had done with Airplane! on film. In fact, it was the quick jokes and never-ceasing sight gags that got it yanked from the air; as one exec infamously said, it didn't work because it required viewers actually pay attention. So back to film they went, keeping pretty much everything but adding big (or, well, biggish) names like George Kennedy, Priscilla Presley, Ricardo Montalban and O.J. Simpson, who spends the film either physically abused or hospitalized.

3 South Park: Bigger, Longer & Uncut (1999) Source: South Park

There's tons of swearing, a couple of big-name cameo voices, a barrage of musical numbers and even a couple effects that are more than two guys working with construction paper. But the South Park movie, which hit theatres in the midst of the show's third season, is basically the same thing, only better than usual. Indeed, if it did anything it established that the show was no fluke, and that creators Trey Parker and Matt Stone had a true, unique angle on America, repression, hypocrisy and anything else they saw fit to satirize. After this the show would be even more giddy about tackling hot button topics, to all of society's betterment.

4 Jackass: The Movie (2002), Jackass 2 (2006), Jackass 3-D (2010) Source: Jackass

Like the South Park movie, the inevitable Jackass movies were bigger and raunchier but essentially the same thing. In this case, the films are mere conveyor belts of gross-out stunts and body trauma, exploring what the physique can take or how far the squad members will go in the pursuit of their, um, craft. Not that they were simply TV on movie screens: by the third we get dildos flying out of the screen in beautiful 3D — surely one of the more original uses of a technology too often used for the truly crass and lowest common denominator.

ALL PHOTOS: CONTRIBUTED/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICES

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CeeLo Green says he has grown personally and professionally and wants to return to The Voice. CASEY CURRY/INVISION/AP

The king of comebacks

NEW ALBUM

Heart Blanche is a 'prequel' to his collection of new music

CeeLo Green says Heart Blanche, his first studio album of new music in five years, is only the beginning of what he has planned.

Green is returning to the spotlight after a professional hiatus that began last year with his departure from NBC's The Voice following a felony drug charge.

The past few years have been a time of introspection and creativity, Green says, and Heart Blanche is among the results.

"This album is a prequel to the rest of the music I want to release in the very near future," Green said in a recent interview. "(It's) the start of a new beginning."

The 40-year-old entertainer, who recently revealed his year-old engagement and desire to return to The Voice, talked about his new album, to be released Friday.

Is Heart Blanche your most personal album yet?
It's always personal to some degree, but much more introspective this time around — more introspective than I've been able to be, had the opportunity of being, the pleasure of being, over the last five years professionally. The last time I did it to this degree was under the alias Gnarls Barkley.

What was your process making this album?
I've been recording this album for about three years. I did some recording in Las Vegas, Los Angeles, Atlanta, the Bahamas, Palm Springs, California.

I've been all over the world recording this record. I'm proud to say that I was very proficient and prolific and I got an awful lot of work done. I have amassed a large amount of material, and I'll be able to use it in increments.

Did you always know you would be a musician?
I would say so. Elton John, for example. Or Earth, Wind & Fire, or KISS and Sly Stone — these people who were — like David Bowie — these people who were iconic images (and) fashionistas, I'm cut from their cloth.

I'm encouraged from their era of entertainment. I do feel like I represent that for a new generation.

Does the little kid in you freak out now that these artists are essentially your peers?
It makes sense to me and I'm cool around these people. I get a chance to be with Prince and I'm cool around him. Because I feel like I know him. I feel like I grew up with him. They feel like extended family, like uncles and aunts.

How creatively satisfying has this new album been?
I'm content with the album but I'm not complacent with the album. I can do more and I want to do more. I want to first be reintroduced, and I want the people to be reminded of who I am in an artistic capacity.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

STAR COUPLE

Gwen and Blake an item

Recently divorced singer Blake Shelton and Gwen Stefani, who filed for divorce in August, are dating.

A representative for Shelton confirmed earlier this week that the two stars are a couple. Both Shelton and Stefani are mentors on NBC's The Voice.

Stefani filed for divorce from fellow musician Gavin Rossdale in August after nearly 13 years of marriage, citing irreconcilable differences. Both are seeking joint custody of their three children.

Shelton and singer Miranda Lambert announced that they were divorced after four years of marriage in July.

Both Shelton and Lambert attended Wednesday night's Country Music Association Awards in Nashville, Tennessee. "I needed a bright spot this year," Lambert said onstage when she won female vocalist of the year.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Anya Dai and Kassey Dimaculangan on the day they got engaged. Dai proposed on the hill on Valentine's Day 2015.
TORSTAR ARCHIVES

She asked him to marry her

Welcome to 2015, when women don't have time to wait around for a man to pop the question

It's Valentine's Day 2015 and two bundled-up snowboarders are about to get engaged.

But the scene that unfolds isn't the typical guy-sweeps-girl-off-her-feet scenario. In fact, it's the opposite.

"What are you doing?!" asks a confused Kassey Dimaculangan as his girlfriend of one year stops him mid-run and gets down on both knees.

"I have to ask you an important question," says Anya Dai, giggling as snow flies in her face and she pulls a small box out of her snowsuit. "Will you marry me?"

While the "proposer" in heterosexual relationships is typically a role filled by men, it's increasingly women who are stepping up by getting down on one knee, say wedding industry pros. These women may have boldness in their blood, but some are also romantics who've grown up dreaming of elaborate male-initiated proposals or religious traditionalists who can't wait to marry in a church. They're the taboo breakers who ask their future in-laws for their partner's hand in marriage.

"I think women are just kind of like, 'Well, if I have equal rights in every other way, why do you get to decide when we get married?'" said Crystal Adair-Benning, owner of Distinct Occasions wedding planning in Toronto. "Women are getting ballsy and getting empowered and they want to propose."

Adair-Benning said she's seen a subtle increase in women proposing to men over her four years of engagement planning. Nearly 10 per cent of her engagement clients are women, but she suspects numbers are likely higher in real life.

Left, Natalia Kaplan and her husband Alex. Natalia proposed after deciding she wanted to be the one to pop the question. Right, Victoria Schwarzl and her now-wife, Emily Herczeg, planned for years to propose to each other at the same time. TORSTAR ARCHIVES

"Women, when they do it, it can either be more spontaneous — it just kind of comes out — or they put some thought into it and already know how they want to propose," she said, adding that men typically think women want romantic, grand proposals and women think men want low-key ones.

For Montrealer Natalia Kaplan, the idea to propose came suddenly. "I was just sitting in class and it just kind of hit me — I didn't want to wait for him to ask," she said.

Unfortunately for her, an excited email she sent to her friend revealing her plan a week later forced her into do or die mode — she'd accidentally cc'd her boyfriend. "I think I'm going to propose to Lex this summer. Oh man it makes me feel giddy and dizzy just writing it out," she wrote. "I mean I've always felt like we will get married at some point but it just kind of hit me the other day why not now, and why can't I ask?"

When he confronted her about it, she freaked out.

"After I calmed down, we sat on the couch … and I'm like, 'Yes, I want to marry you,'" the 25-year-old recalls. The two were married in June 2014.

Risk and reward

Proposals don't always elicit happy tears, warns Toronto psychologist and relationship expert Nicole McCance.

Possible female proposal-related risks include blindsiding a man who doesn't want to get married or sparking a certain "failure to launch" feeling in him for having de facto lost his chance to propose.

Women, too, have to be ready to forever give up the experience of being proposed to, brace for family and friends voicing antiquated viewpoints and prepare for the inevitable question: "Show me your ring!"

For Dai, the 23-year-old snowboarder who proposed on Valentine's Day, she was hit with some unexpected backlash.

"(My boyfriend's parents) were like, 'No. That's not OK. Why would you do that?'" she recalls. "I was like, 'Uh, I don't know, I love him?'"

Dai also had to give up a lifelong dream — she was obsessed with tales of romantic engagements growing up — but she wanted to show her future husband just how serious she was by sacrificing that.

"I wasn't just saying yes to him," said Dai, who first bonded with Dimaculangan over their shared Christian faith. "I (was giving) up what I've always dreamed of … I wouldn't do that for anyone else."

Dimaculangan's parents eventually came around when he proposed to her a few weeks later, giving her the custom ring he'd had in the making for months — but it didn't diminish his pride in his now-wife's boldness.

"One person asked me if I felt like less of a man in the relationship," he said. "I feel actually more special and if anything more of a man — that a woman loves me so much that she would go against the grain."

Same-Sex Proposal

For lesbian couples, a woman proposing isn't revolutionary but it's still a chance to buck tradition.

"One of the things that's great about a same-sex relationship is that the gender roles are not there and you can make up what you want," said Victoria Schwarzl, communications manager of Pride Toronto.

Schwarzl and her now-wife, Emily Herczeg, proposed to one another in a preplanned event back in December 2013. It was a surprise-free decision that gave them the chance to pick out rings together, get their future in-laws blessings and each pop the question. "The proposing is when the magic really happens and it's that moment where your life changes forever," said Schwarzl, 28. "I think it was really important that we both had that opportunity to tell the other person … these are the reasons why I love you."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR PROPOSING

DO

- **Manage your expectations:** While women are often surprised by proposals, a guy might be even more so. Give him a chance to absorb it, acknowledging that he might be knocked off his feet — hopefully in a good way.
- **Hint at it:** Try to sense how your boyfriend might respond. An easy way to gauge his reaction? Toss out this line: "I read this article about women proposing to men!" If he's not into it, that's his prerogative, but it might give you a sense of the kind of man he is.

DON'T

- **Do it for the wrong reasons:** Don't propose as an ultimatum. If you know he's not ready to get married, springing a proposal on him is likely a bad move. Coercion is not romantic.
- **Regret it:** Make sure you're confident in your decision to propose. If you've always fantasized about a man professing his undying love and asking for your hand in marriage, be prepared to forgo that dream.

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Your essential daily news

Trump Toronto named No. 1 hotel in Canada by Condé Nast Traveler readers

A golf getaway with star power

MONTEREY PENINSULA, CALIF.

Carmel area renowned for beauty, Hollywood ties

Brian Kendall
For Metro Canada

Even now, almost 30 years after his wildly publicized reign as the town's mayor, Clint Eastwood remains a towering figure in Carmel-by-the-Sea.

Tourists fantasize about bumping into him at his restaurant at Mission Ranch, the Hollywood icon's nine-hectare property just outside of town, and look for him as they explore the tony streets and hidden courtyards of this unendingly charming coastal community on California's Monterey Peninsula.

But these days Eastwood is more likely to be found teeing it up at nearby Pebble Beach Golf Links, the fabled course he co-owns with Arnold Palmer and former Major League Baseball commissioner Peter Ueberroth.

One of the finest, most dramatic courses anywhere, Pebble Beach is the undisputed golf headliner of a famously seductive peninsula two hours south of San Francisco that includes the communities of Carmel-by-the-Sea, Pacific Grove, Seaside and Pebble Beach.

Pebble Beach golf course in Monterey, Calif., offers dramatic views from its emerald fairways. ISTOCK

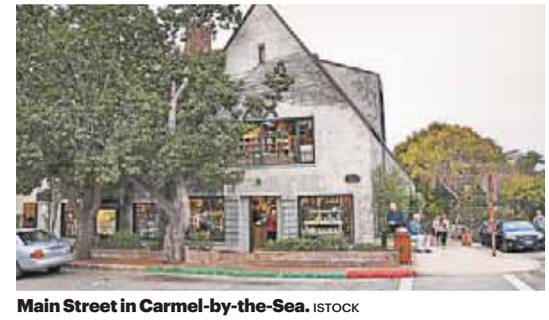
Pebble Beach, a bucket-list course for every golfer, charges a green fee of $495, one of the most expensive in the game. But the good news is that golfers don't have to break the bank to enjoy memorable golf on the Monterey Peninsula.

Pebble Beach's sister courses, Spyglass Hill Golf Course and the Links at Spanish Bay, both offer spectacular ocean views at more palatable prices.

Another local beauty is Del Monte Golf Course, opened in 1897 and the oldest course in continuous operation west of the Mississippi. Two recently renovated layouts, Poppy Hills Golf Club and Quail Lodge Golf Course, are also highly regarded designs.

And a special favourite of knowledgeable golfers is Pacific Grove Golf Links, an affordable oceanfront beauty known as the "other Pebble."

Between rounds, head back to Carmel to explore a coastal town jam-packed with upscale restaurants, hidden courtyards, quirky passageways, au courant art galleries and elegantly cosy inns.



Main Street in Carmel-by-the-Sea. ISTOCK

One of the most popular places to stay is Cypress Inn, co-owned by another Hollywood legend and local resident, Doris Day. The hit recordings of the now 91-year-old Day are piped into the 44 sunny rooms of the 1929 local landmark.

Carmel's small downtown is an architectural mishmash of English-style country houses, Swiss chalets and, most notably, the 21 whimsical fairy tale cottages built by local architect Hugh Comstock starting in the 1920s. Eastwood, who was elected for a two-year term in 1986 on a pro-progress platform, dismissed these Comstock Cottages as "Smurf homes."

Once a bohemian refuge for artists such as writer Jack London and photographers Ansel Adams and Edward Weston, Carmel now numbers among the most exclusive addresses in California. Real estate prices soar ever higher on the approach to Carmel Bay, where the sea ebbs and crashes against a long white-sand beach.

Glimpsed at cliff-top across the bay are the emerald fairways of famed Pebble Beach, for golfers the most alluring of all the wonders on the Monterey Peninsula.

For more golf destinations, visit Brian's website at canadiangolftraveller.com

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TRIPADVISOR RANKING

Jakarta tops list of most affordable destinations in Asia

Jakarta, Indonesia has emerged as the most affordable travel destination in Asia for U.S. travellers this winter, according to the number crunchers at TripAdvisor.

In fact, for Americans who've long had Asia on their minds, there's perhaps no better time to book a trip than this winter, as the average price of a one-week trip to the Far East has dropped 12 per cent compared to the same period last year.

Moreover, most of the destinations that cracked the top 10 list are located in Southeast Asia, where temperatures are still mild and the sun high.

For travellers on a budget, the Indonesian capital is a good bet, having recorded the biggest drop at 32 per cent.

The total price tag for a seven-night trip to Jakarta — including flight and hotel — clocks in at $1,343, the lowest rate of 20 cities covered in the index.

That compares to Hong Kong, the priciest destination on the list, with a one-week trip costing $2,590, mostly due to a six per cent spike in airfare recorded this season.

"Asia consistently provides outstanding accommodation value and this year U.S. travellers can also take advantage of significantly lower airfares, so winter is a great time for Americans to explore the Far East, with both the weather and prices more moderate," said TripAdvisor spokesperson Brooke Ferencsik.

Overall, Thailand and Vietnam are the most budget-friendly countries in Asia: Thailand landed three spots on the top 10 list, while Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, both in Vietnam, took the second and third spots.

For the ranking, analysts looked at the average price of a one-week trip to 20 popular Asian cities between Nov. 1, 2015, and April 30, 2016. AFP

The average price of a one-week trip Jakarta, Indonesia, has dropped 32 per cent compared to last year. ISTOCK

CHEAP THRILLS

The Top 10 most affordable destinations in Asia this winter, according to TripAdvisor:

1. Jakarta, Indonesia, $1,343 USD
2. Hanoi, Vietnam, $1,366
3. Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, $1,434
4. Chiang Mai, Thailand, $1,577
5. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, $1,589
6. Shanghai, China, $1,665
7. Bangkok, Thailand, $1,680
8. New Delhi, $1,877
9. Siem Reap, Cambodia, $1,895
10. Kathu, Thailand, $1,902

Finding the pure life in Costa Rica

NATURE BREAK

Go from a turtle's nest on the beach to a sky-high zip line

Kathy Buckworth
For Metro Canada

The shores of the Tortuguero River are home to various wildlife. PHOTOS BY KATHY BUCKWORTH/FOR METRO

A fitting philosophy for a land that is 46 per cent forested.

"Pura Vida" said our guide, as we arrived in San José, Costa Rica, which, literally translated, means "pure life." This describes the mandate of this eco-conscious country and the joy its inhabitants take in living in a land that is 46 per cent forested; it is generally used as an answer to "How are you?" or just as a hello.

They say hello, or good morning, early in Costa Rica. Year round, the sun rises around 5:30 and sets around 5:30. When the sun is up, there is a huge diversity of outdoor, natural and wildlife adventures to experience in this relatively small country. We had said goodbye to our cubicle office plants and hello to the pure life that awaited.

Tortuguero, on the Caribbean coast, is a small village of 1,000 inhabitants, accessible only by boat or airplane and is known for the turtle hatchings that happen on the beach in the dark of night. Hundreds of turtle nests produce thousands of eggs (of which 0.1 per cent survive to adulthood), every May to November.

Spotters from the National Park find where the nest has been dug, and quietly, without light, allow visitors to witness a turtle laying approximately 110 eggs. The turtles start laying eggs at around the age of 25, and do so until they are 150, coming back to the same spot, every two to three years.

But that's not all the wildlife; the shores of the Tortuguero River leading in and out of the village are dotted with crocodiles, caimans, sloths, blue herons, macaws, toucans, and many other bird species. With some trepidation, we slid into our kayaks to paddle the river, but found our voyage strangely serene, barring the prehistoric cries from the surprisingly tiny howler monkeys that populate the area.

Across the country to La Fortuna, we found one of the most popular tourist spots in Costa Rica, with a huge variety of outdoor activities to choose from. From careening down Costa Rica's highest zip line at Sky Adventures — half a mile, at more than 60 miles per hour — to the hot springs, water parks, horseback riding, and many hiking trails available. The village is shadowed by the Arenal Volcano, which has been dormant since 2010. It's hard to remember the water cooler gossip when you're soaking in the natural hot springs — the perfect way to purify both body and brain at the end of a wild (life) and wonderful day.

For more information visit savethecanadians.org. #PuraVida

The writer was a guest of the Costa Rica Tourism Board, which did not review nor approve the story.

TRAVEL NOTES SKI MERGER, TRAVEL LOGS AND JAPAN JUNKET

Bigger ski country
Park City Mountain Resort and Canyons Resort in Utah have merged under the new ownership of Vail Resorts to form Park City, now the largest ski and snowboard resort in the U.S. After a $50-million reno and a new high-speed, two-way gondola that links the two areas, Park City now offers 7,300+ acres of skiing on 300+ trails, with 41 lifts. Visit ParkCity.com.

Park City, Utah. CONTRIBUTED

Travel field journal
New book Do Big Small Things inspires readers to connect with the transformative power of travel. Written by travel company G Adventures founder Bruce Poon Tip, it functions as a type of visual workbook, where you are encouraged to record the essence of your trips, however far-flung or close to home, and share the creativity online. $30 (Collins), DoBigSmallThings.com.

Draw inspiration from your travels. CONTRIBUTED

Bucket list: Osaka
Tokyo's sexier cousin Osaka is so worth building into your Japan plan. The nightlife, the amazing food, the shopping, the history — this tiny city of only 19 million practically vibrates. From the Osaka Castle with its huge moat to the Shinto Sumiyoshi-taisha Shrine, you won't lack for ancient culture to soak up. Plan for spring to hit apple blossom time. Visit osaka-info.jp. DOUG WALLACE

Dōtonbori has an endless selection of eats. CONTRIBUTED

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Riu Palace Punta Cana
Junior Suite
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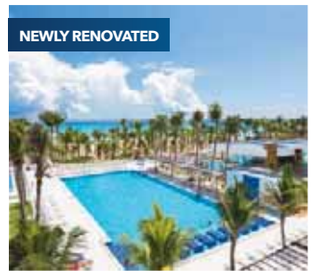

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Riu Playacar ★★★★★
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Aruba
Riu Palace Antillas ★★★★★
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Hotel Room • Dec 04, 07, 11 & 14
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Nassau, The Bahamas ★★★★★
Riu Palace Paradise Island
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$595 + $365 taxes

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Oceanview Room • Dec 01 & 08
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Punta Cana, D.R.
Riu Bambu ★★★★★
Hotel Room • Nov 27 & Dec 04
$695 + $405 taxes

Los Cabos, Mexico
Riu Santa Fe ★★★★Plus
Hotel Room
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Cancun, Mexico
Riu Caribe ★★★★Plus
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Panama
Riu Playa Blanca ★★★★★
Courtyardview Room
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$795 + $288 taxes

Negril, Jamaica
Riu Negril ★★★★★
Gardenview Room
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Liberia, Costa Rica
Riu Guanacaste ★★★★★
Hotel Room • Dec 04 & 12
$995 + $305 taxes

St. Maarten ★★★★★
Riu Palace St Martin
Junior Suite Gardenview
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Liberia, Costa Rica ★★★★★
Riu Palace Costa Rica
Junior Suite Gardenview
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Santiago de Cuba, Cuba
Club Amigo Carisol Los Corales ★★★
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Hotel Room • Dec 16
$295 + $380 taxes

Cayo Coco, Cuba
IBEROSTAR Mojito ★★★★
Hotel Room
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$365 + $380 taxes

Varadero, Cuba ★★★Plus
Sol Sirenas Coral Resort
Hotel Room
Nov 24, 25, Dec 01, 02, 08 & 09
$395 + $380 taxes

Holguin, Cuba
Playa Costa Verde ★★★★
Hotel Room • Dec 01, 02 & 11
$425 + $380 taxes

Cayo Santa Maria, Cuba
Warwick Cayo Santa Maria Resort ★★★★
Deluxe Gardenview Room
Jan 06, 13, 20 & 27
$645 + $380 taxes

La Romana, D.R. ★★★★
Be Live Collection Canoa
Hotel Room • Jan 01, 08 & 15
$695 + $455 taxes

Grand Bahama, The Bahamas
Viva Wyndham Fortuna Beach ★★★Plus
Hotel Room • Jan 06, 13 & 20
$695 + $415 taxes

La Ceiba
Telamar Resort ★★★★
SuperSaver Room • Jan 11 & 18
$795 + $335 taxes

Roatan
Fantasy Island Beach Resort Dive Marina ★★★
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Tips for booking your sun holiday

ON THE MOVE

All-inclusive resort evolves, Cuba beckons

Loren Christie
For Metro Canada

The waterfront of historic Punda with its Dutch colonial architecture in Willemstad, Curaçao. ISTOCK

Attention sun seekers: There are a few things you need to bear in mind as you plan your winter vacation.

It is not going to be a great year for cheap and cheerful deals. Most tour operators do their contracting in U.S. dollars so the unfavourable exchange rate means sun holidays will be harder on the wallet.

Additionally, it is shaping up to be a strong El Niño winter, which means cooler temperatures in closer (and typically cheaper) destinations like Florida, Bahamas, Cuba and parts of Mexico. Although it is impossible to fully predict the weather, those craving heat are advised to drop a few extra dollars and go a little farther south.

According to the Caribbean Tourism Organization, the Dutch island of Curaçao, located just 60 kilometres north of Venezuela, is the fastest-growing Caribbean destination for Canadians. Transat begins its inaugural flights to the island in December.

Resorts go upscale

The all-inclusive resort continues to evolve, going more upscale with better food, decor, service and higher-end liquor choices. Karisma Hotels, for example, are branding themselves as gourmet-inclusive versus all-inclusive because of their all à-la-carte dining — no buffets and no reservations required.

Hyatt has broken into the all-inclusive market with upscale resorts such as the Hyatt Ziva and Hyatt Zilara, and mega resorts such as Casa de Campo in Dominican Republic continue to grow in popularity.

Spanning 7,000 tropical acres, Casa de Campo is home to three golf courses, a 370-slip Marina and Yacht Club, a polo club and Altos de Chavón, an artisan's village modelled after a 16th-century Mediterranean city with boutiques, museums and a 5,000-seat Grecian-style amphitheatre.

Hot spots

Destinations in Central America such as Roatán, Honduras, are growing in popularity. Panama has opened a new airport in Río Hato, drastically cutting the transfer time to many of that country's most popular resorts.

Tourism to Cuba is up almost 25 per cent as Canadians race to see it before the country opens up to the wider U.S. market. A great option for those wanting to explore this gem of a destination is Cuba Cruise.

Introduced just two years ago, this small ship offers a seven-night itinerary that circumnavigates the island, stopping at the less-travelled ports of Cienfuegos, Santiago de Cuba and exotic Maria la Gorda. It also includes an overnight stay in the lively capital of Havana and the chance to snorkel above colourful coral reefs.

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Including taxes and fees

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Dreams Puerto Aventuras
★★★★
Room /All Inclusive
Dec 3, 2015 • 7 Nights
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Including taxes and fees

DOMINICAN

PUNTA CANA
Be Live Collection Punta Cana
★★★★
Upgrade To Superior Deluxe /All Inclusive
Dec 9, 2015 • 7 Nights
$1030
Including taxes and fees

PUERTO PLATA
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metro SPORTS

Mets pitcher Matt Harvey was named the NL Comeback Player of the Year and Rangers DH Prince Fielder earned the AL honour

Offence not coming easy but Kadri still improving

MAPLE LEAFS

Centre picks up his two-way game to delight of Babcock

Nazem Kadri's offensive stats line reads as if something is not right with the Maple Leafs' top centre and expected scoring leader.

Kadri ranks eighth overall in the NHL with 48 shots on goal, a seemingly sufficient amount to produce more than the lone goal he has up to this point in the season.

Yet, Kadri's name continually surfaces when coach Mike Babcock doles out post-game praise. And that stems from the fact that offence, largely the defining aspect of Kadri's Leafs career so far, is now standing in the shadow of his two-way play.

In fact, Kadri, a centre gifted with great hands, deft moves and creative thinking with the puck, is now more of a "shutdown" pivot. On most nights, he will be facing the opposition's best line, and it will be Kadri who is expected to keep them off the scoreboard instead of solely focusing on point production.

"He's (Babcock) given me the opportunity to have success on that level. It's something I've wanted to do my whole career," Kadri said of his growing role as a shutdown forward.

"He wants me to be two-dimensional, not all offence ... and he's giving me the opportunity to do that. And I'm going to make mistakes for sure, but I think I've done OK for the first month. Mike keeps giving me the opportunity to redeem myself when I make a mistake, too."

Kadri, naturally, has not lost sight of the fact he's still among the club's top six forwards, and expected to produce to the level of one.

Babcock, though, challenged him to become a three-zone player, one who covers the entire ice, with a consistent emphasis on backchecking and helping his defencemen out in the Leafs zone.

Kadri has faced that responsibility before with past Leaf coaches, but in Babcock's systems, the centre is possibly the key to the success of the entire approach.

"In our systems, too, there's lots of demand on the centres to be up and down the ice all the time," Kadri said.

"But if you do it the right way, you end up with the puck a lot more. You're on offence more than you think and, let's face it, it's better playing offence than defence."

Kadri and the Leafs had an off-ice practice Thursday in advance of back-to-back games — Friday at home to Detroit, and Saturday in Washington.

Babcock's day included a news conference to confirm his return to the bench to guide Canada in the next major international competition, the World Cup in Toronto in 2016.

Leafs defenceman Frank Corrado returned to the Leafs from a conditioning stint with the Marlies, but the coaching staff has yet to determine where he draws in. The Leafs roster is at the maximum 23 players, so there's the possibility of a player being returned to the Marlies to clear room for Corrado.

The Leafs also placed goalie Jonathan Bernier on the disabled list, retroactive to the last game he played, which was Oct. 31. Bernier must remain on the DL for at least seven days, which means he will not play in either of the back-to-back games this weekend.

James Reimer makes the start Friday at home to the Red Wings, but Babcock has not confirmed his goaltending plans for Saturday. That may pivot on how Reimer performs Friday; Marlies call-up Antoine Bibeau has stepped into the backup role, and could be pressed into a start, which would mark the first of his NHL career.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Nazem Kadri, right, draws praise from his coach despite modest numbers. LEON HALIP/GETTY IMAGES

WORLD CUP OF HOCKEY

Babcock chosen over Quenneville to coach Canada

When the Colorado Avalanche fired Joel Quenneville in 2008, Detroit Red Wings coach Mike Babcock invited him to join his staff as an assistant.

While that didn't work out, Babcock and Quenneville will now be working together on Canada's World Cup of Hockey team. Babcock is back as the head coach after winning back-to-back Olympic gold, but not without the management group giving strong consideration to hiring Quenneville.

"It was a two-horse race for me," Canadian general manager Doug Armstrong said Thursday. "I wasn't torn on the final decision, but I thought we had to give Joel Quenneville the opportunity for us to discuss him. You just can't get past three Stanley Cups in six years. What excites me is having both guys on the staff."

Babcock has never lost with Canada in international competition, winning gold at the 1997 world junior championships, 2004 world championships and then the 2010 and 2014 Olympics. Hockey Canada president and CEO Tom Renney called Babcock's international excellence the "tipping point."

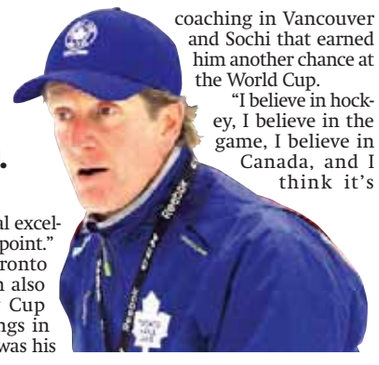
> **When they asked me, obviously I was thrilled.**
> Mike Babcock

The current Toronto Maple Leafs coach also won the Stanley Cup with the Red Wings in 2008. Of course it was his coaching in Vancouver and Sochi that earned him another chance at the World Cup.

"I believe in hockey, I believe in the game, I believe in Canada, and I think it's important that we continue to do everything we can to stay on top and so I like being part of it," Babcock said.

Joining Babcock and Quenneville in undertaking this challenge are assistants Claude Julien of the Boston Bruins, Barry Trotz of the Washington Capitals and Bill Peters of the Carolina Hurricanes.

Quenneville will run Canada's defence, Trotz and Julien will focus on special teams and Peters will be in charge of pre-scouting like Ralph Krueger was at the Olympics. THE CANADIAN PRESS



LAW

Kane in the clear as case collapses

Chicago Blackhawks forward Patrick Kane can focus solely on his NHL career after avoiding criminal charges in a rape investigation, with prosecutors ending a bizarre three-month ordeal that put one of hockey's biggest stars at the centre of intense speculation and criticism.

Prosecutors announced Thursday they declined to file charges against Kane because of a lack of credible evidence in a case "rife with reasonable doubt." The accuser signed an affidavit saying she did not want to press charges, prosecutors said.

Roland Cercone, a lawyer for the 21-year-old woman who made the accusation, did not return messages seeking comment from The Associated Press. A person who answered the accuser's mother's cellphone hung up Thursday when contacted by the news wire.

Erie County District Attorney Frank Sedita said a three-month investigation found that physical and forensic evidence "tend to contradict" the accuser's claim that she was raped on Aug. 2 at Kane's off-season home outside Buffalo.

"The DNA results lend no corroboration whatsoever to the complainant's claim," said Sedita, who decided against presenting the case to a grand jury for possible charges.

"I have repeatedly said that I did nothing wrong," Kane said in a statement issued by the Blackhawks. "I have respected the legal process and I am glad that this matter has now been closed and I will have nothing further to say going forward."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Patrick Kane
BRUCE BENNETT/GETTY IMAGES

Ray tuning up for the playoffs

CFL

Argos take on Bombers to cap regular season

There will be no late-season rest for Ricky Ray.

Ray will be under centre Friday night when Toronto hosts the Winnipeg Blue Bombers at Rogers Centre in the regular-season finale for both teams. The Argonauts (9-8) have already clinched third in the East Division so such veterans as slotback Chad Owens, running back Brandon Whitaker, receiver Vidal Hazelton and offensive lineman Chris Van Zeyl won't play.

Usually Ray would be included in that group. But the 36-year-old will be making just his second start of the season and acknowledges he needs the snaps.

"The more reps I can get, the better," he said. "My mindset is I'm going to be ready to play the whole game like it's any other game.

"We've had the luxury here a few times of being able to rest some guys (but) for me it's not my scenario this year. I'm just looking forward to get out there and getting as many reps as I can."

Ray missed half the year recovering from off-season right-shoulder surgery. And when he returned in September, it was as incumbent Trevor Harris's backup.

Ray made his 2015 debut as Toronto's starter last Friday, completing 26 of 38 passes for 227 yards with a TD and interception in the Argos' 27-25 home loss to B.C.

"I didn't feel too bad," Ray said. "I felt like I saw things pretty well.

"I missed a few reads and a couple of throws, more of just kind of pocket movement, throwing off-balance a little bit."

Although nearly a year has passed since Ray underwent surgery, he said his arm strength hasn't completely returned.

"No, it's not back to where it was pre-injury but I feel like compared to last year it's pretty darn similar," he said. "It would be nice to be 23 again."

Toronto will play its final home game at Rogers Centre as the club will move into a refurbished BMO Field next year. The contest could also be Ray's last on home soil with the Argos as he's in the final year of his CFL deal.

"It (becoming a free agent in February) has definitely entered my mind, " he said. "It's going to be a possibility for me but it's hard to say what's going to happen.

"I'm just focusing on the games we have and don't really think about that right now. I still have the drive to play and still feel like I want to play."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NOMINEES

The Blue Bombers' Jamaal Westerman received three nominations in balloting for the CFL's individual awards Thursday.

The defensive end was a unanimous selection as Winnipeg's top Canadian and also got the nod as top player and defensive player.

Argos quarterback Trevor Harris is also nominated for top player.

Ricky Ray has missed half the year recovering from off-season surgery on his throwing arm.
MIKE CAMPBELL/FOR TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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MLB

Royals exercise options on all-stars

The World Series champion Kansas City Royals kept on shaping their roster for next season on Thursday, exercising an $8-million option on all-star closer Wade Davis and $5.25-million option on all-star shortstop Alcides Escobar.

The Royals also declined a $3-million option on outfielder Jonny Gomes, one day after learning all-star outfielder Alex Gordon had declined his player option and choosing not to exercise options on aging outfielder Alex Rios and unproductive starter Jeremy Guthrie.

General manager Dayton Moore indicated Thursday the Royals are interested in signing Gordon and free agent Ben Zobrist.

"We'll see what the market brings," Moore said. "Obviously our goal is to bring back players that are most impactful to us, and you know, the players you mentioned have been a big part of our success here. We'll do everything we can to make sure we operate efficiently, first of all, and do the best we can to get them back. We'll see what happens."

There was no question that Davis and Escobar will be part of the 2016 team.

After a starring turn as a setup man, Davis took over as the closer when Greg Holland required Tommy John surgery. He wound up saving four games in the playoffs, and recorded the final out in the 12th inning of Game 5 against the New York Mets to wrap up the World Series.

Escobar was MVP of the AL Championship Series, and proved to be a sparkplug when he returned to the top of the lineup late in the season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Alcides Escobar GETTY IMAGES

.478
Escobar's batting average in the six-game ALCS against the Blue Jays.

IN BRIEF

Canadian women blanked by U.S. at Four Nations Cup

The Canadian women's hockey team fell 3-0 to the United States in the preliminary round of the Four Nations Cup on Thursday.

Monique Lamoureux and Megan Bozak scored in the second period and Kendall Coyne added an empty-net goal for the U.S. (2-0).

Canada (1-1) faces host Sweden (0-2) on Saturday in the annual women international tournament, while the U.S. faces Finland on Saturday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Vegas to host men's world curling championship

The 2018 men's world curling championship will be held in Las Vegas.

The World Curling Federation chose the gambling and nightlife hot spot because of the success of the 2014 World Financial Group Continental Cup, which drew over 50,000 spectators to the Orleans Hotel and Casino.

Sweden's Niklas Edin won the 2015 men's world title in Halifax. The championship heads to Basel, Switzerland, in 2016 and then to Canada to a city yet to be named in 2017.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CAMPAIGN

Phasing out Native American mascots

Adidas is offering to help high schools nationwide drop Native American mascots. The athletic shoe and apparel maker said Thursday it will provide free design resources to schools looking to shelve Native American mascots, nicknames, imagery or symbolism. The German company also pledged to provide financial support to ensure the cost of changing is not prohibitive.

Adidas announced the initiative in conjunction with the White House Tribal Nations Conference on Thursday in Washington. Adidas executives were among those attending the conference, which includes leaders from the 567 federally recognized tribes.

The company also said it will be a founding member of a coalition that addresses Native American mascots in sports.

According to the group Change the Mascot, there are about 2,000 schools nationwide that have Native American mascots. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CSA weighing up bid for men's 2026 World Cup

SOCCER

Contributing factor is success of this year's women's event

After successfully hosting two major women's soccer tournaments over the last couple of years, the Canadian Soccer Association is now giving serious consideration to bidding for the next FIFA World Cup.

"I think our next project as a country, and as a soccer country, would be the men's World Cup," Victor Montagliani, the CSA's president, told a news conference Thursday.

"We have hosted every other World Cup. We have been successful at every other one we have hosted. I think it's a natural progression for us to seriously look at bidding for the men's World Cup."

The CSA released figures Thursday showing the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup and 2014 U-20 Women's World Cup created a combined $493.6 million in economic activity. That exceeded the preliminary projections of $337 million made in February 2014.

The cost for the two tournaments was $216 million. They generated $249 million in net economic activity with $97.6 million in tax revenues, the association said. Montagliani couldn't immediately say how much economic activity the tournaments generated individually.

USA's Megan Rapinoe with the trophy AFP/GETTY IMAGES

This year's women's World Cup was held between June 6 and July 5. The 24-team tournament played games in venues at Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Ottawa, Montreal and Moncton, N.B.

A crowd of 53,341 watched the U.S. defeat Japan 5-2 in the final at BC Place Stadium in Vancouver. Overall the tournament's 52 games attracted 1,353,506 fans for an average attendance of 26,029.

The CSA says more than 84,000 visitors made one or more day trips while 174,000 visitors made an overnight visit to one of the host cities. A total of 96,000 American fans crossed the border.

The U-20 Women's World Cup was held Aug. 5 to Aug. 24 in Edmonton, Toronto, Montreal and Moncton. In the past Canada has hosted the 2002 FIFA U-19 Women's World Cup and the 2007 U-20 Men's World Cup.

The 2018 World Cup is scheduled for Russia and the 2022 competition in Qatar.

Canada's Christine Sinclair celebrates scoring in the World Cup quarter-final with England. The event was more beneficial to the economy than was expected. BEN NELMS/GETTY IMAGES

Montagliani said it's expected the 2026 World Cup would be awarded to the Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean (CONCACAF), of which Canada is a member.

"It's kind of expected it should come this way," he said. "They usually award World Cups an average of eight years before." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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RECIPE Roasted Dijon Chicken

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

This cosy dinner is the perfect way to end the week. It's in the oven just long to whip of some mashed potatoes to serve with it.

Ready in
Prep time: 20 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 6 skinless, boneless chicken thighs
- Salt and pepper
- 1 tsp oil
- 1 minced shallot
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 Tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1/4 cup apple cider
- 1/4 cup low-sodium chicken broth

Directions
1. Preheat oven to 425 F. Generously season chicken with salt and pepper.
2. Add oil to a large oven-safe skillet over medium heat. Add chicken and cook for 10 minutes (the meat will not be cooked through).
3. Transfer the skillet to the oven. Roast until chicken is cooked through, about 6-8 minutes.
4. Transfer chicken pieces to a platter. Return skillet to medium heat and add shallots and garlic; cook for about 1 minute. Whisk in Dijon mustard, apple cider, broth and a bit more salt and pepper; cook for about 3 minutes. Return chicken to skillet along with juices that have settled on the platter to rewarm. Serve with our favourite sides.

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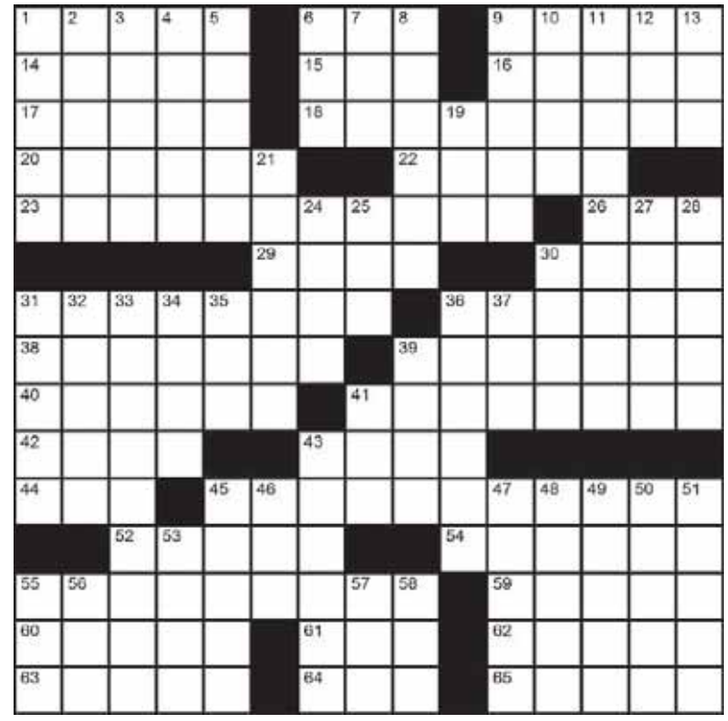
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Building's construction details, commonly
6. Initials-sharers of Jane Eyre's author
9. "..._ _ goes something like this..." (Singer's intro for the song)
14. _-eyed
15. Sales pro
16. Ms. Carter of country tunes
17. Amber, for example
18. Like the still-there pile that still hasn't been taken away
20. Zoroastrianism sacred texts
22. Still _ _ (Maya Angelou poem)
23. Senate of Canada... Creature which is one of the symbols on the coffered ceiling of The Red Chamber: 2 wds.
26. Rapscallion
29. Mistake-maker's reaction
30. Triad
31. Moustache-growing fundraising month
36. Fierce frowns
38. Ticklish music keys
39. Gooey/gravy fries order in Canada
40. : ...and : : :
41. Formally called forth
42. Tosses out
43. Celebrity
44. Sort of salute
45. Green-headed bird commemorated as a roadside attraction in the Village of Andrew in Alberta: 2 wds.
52. Leisurely walk along
54. Console
55. One might require you to fast ahead of time: 2 wds.
59. Insert
60. Trunk
61. "Hurray!"
62. Scoundrel's smile
63. Naomi of "King Kong" (2005)
64. Undercover agent
65. Dawdle

DOWN
1. Barnyard bedding
2. Vex
3. Art studio stand
4. Illusionist Mr. Angel
5. New Wave band's piano, for short
6. French vineyard
7. Mr. Stiller
8. Parsley amounts
9. _. Assistant (Office gig)
10. Modernists
11. Thunder Bay born member of downhill skiing's famous 'Crazy Canucks': 2 wds.
12. 'Serpent' suffix
13. Little bit
19. 'Ranch' suffix
21. Sun-dried bricks
24. Egg masses
25. Umbrella mo.
27. Last name of Kanga's creator
28. Modelled
30. L. Frank Baum dog
31. Super tiny
32. Egg-shaped
33. Lord _ (J.K. Rowling villain)
34. Cupid's Greek counterpart
35. Maximum opp.
36. Infomercial pioneer Suzanne
37. Magna _ laude
39. Athletic brand
41. "My Gal _" (1942)
43. Philadelphia players
45. Early platform for PCs
46. At the age of, in Latin [abbr.]
47. Bible-sounding verb
48. "Last Dance" singer Ms. Summer
49. Speak
50. Support the sport with a shout!
51. John _, U.S. Secretary of State
53. Jacob van _ the Elder (Flemish painter)
55. "One more thing..." on the Web
56. Mauna _ (Hawaiian volcano)
57. Devitalize
58. Posh-style 'your'

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Push yourself forward and show the world what you are capable of. Today's Sun-Pluto link will make you more ambitious than usual, so any opportunities that come your way will be gratefully received, and used.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Others can wallow in self-pity but you will keep a positive attitude. If bad news arrives from out of the blue today stay focused on what needs to get done.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Don't keep your hopes and dreams to yourself. The more people understand what it is you are hoping to achieve the more likely it is you will get assistance from them.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
It may feel as if you have a mountain to climb, and maybe you have, but don't doubt that you will reach the top. You have what it takes to succeed and you have powerful people on your side. Use them.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
Look ahead and getting ready to meet the challenges that you know are coming your way. Plan your strategy in as much detail as possible.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Don't take anything too seriously and don't get angry with people who seem to think the world is coming to an end. There is a lot of hysteria at the moment, but you don't have to join in the stupidity.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Someone who can usually be counted on to support you with no questions asked will wonder aloud today if you know what you are doing. You do. Ask them why they no longer have faith in you.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
If you push yourself beyond your usual limits you will find your second wind and overcome challenges with ease. You know what needs to be done and you can manage it.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
You are acting suspiciously. Others think you have something to hide. Whatever your secret, they will find out sooner or later. Why not confess and get it over with?

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Not everyone can be as confident and adventurous as you, so make allowances for those who don't want to follow your lead. A little caution might be a good thing. This is not a day to take too many risks.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Get yourself noticed. If you are a typical Aquarius you don't really care what other people think of you but it's in your interests now to at least look as if you do.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
Money worries have caused you a lot of sleepless nights but it won't be long before your financial problems are solved. That is not an excuse to go on yet another spending binge.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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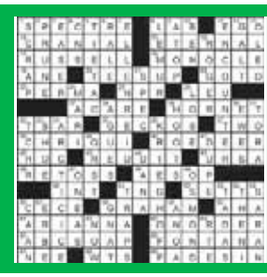

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7	5	4	2	6	1	9	8	3
8	9	1	5	4	3	7	2	6
9	6	8	4	2	5	3	7	1
5	4	7	1	3	6	8	9	2
1	3	2	7	9	8	4	6	5

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